THE OCEAN AND THE DESERT.

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BY

A MADRAS OFFICER.

BODLEIANA · BIBLIOTHECA ·

VOL. I.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY T. C. NEWBY, MORTIMER STREET,
CAVENDISH SQUARE.
1846.

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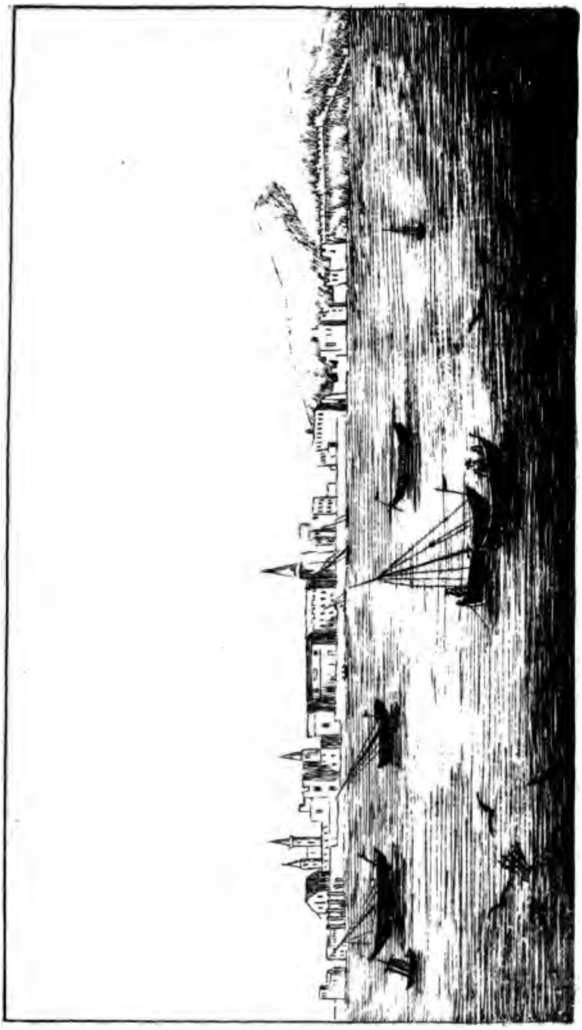

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WILLIAM AND RICHARD WOODCOCK,
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PREFACE.

I AM perfectly aware that other and far more competent pens than mine have written on the subject of these papers, in a general way; but I do not think any one has as yet entered into a detail of an overland journey from the shores of India to those of our much-loved country.

I have put down all that occurred, from the day of embarkation to that of our landing; and perhaps I have entered lengthily into minutiæ, which may be considered as matter irreverent to the main subject. I hope I may be excused

having done so, when I here state, that my sole object in writing is to point out the obvious advantages of returning home by the route we took, not only in point of economy, but as affording to the Indian traveller ample opportunity of visiting and seeing countries, which perhaps he may never have visited or seen before, and which, in all probability, he may never have a chance of visiting or seeing again. I say these are advantages over the Cape passage in every respect, and, I think, those who have taken both routes, will admit the force of my observation.

I have told a plain unvarnished tale; and I trust my readers will appreciate my humble efforts to be useful. Every thing is put down exactly as it occurred or came under my observation. We had our disagreeables, certainly, but the question is, are those likely to occur again? and if they do, what are they, com-

paratively speaking, to the long, dreary three or four months in a sailing ship round the Cape?

The illustrations (if they will bear that denomination) are mostly from sketches of my own, taken on the spot; some there are which I have been obliged to copy from originals; the whole are however the produce of my own pencil, intended more with a view to elucidate, than to embellish, the subjects which I have attempted to describe.

I trust, in conclusion, I may be pardoned any errors of judgment, or of description, as to localities, that I may have committed; failings, of the which, the best and most accurately informed even are sometimes apt to be guilty. If I have in any way erred, my kind readers must attribute the circumstance more to my misfortune, than my fault; since, in detailing this overland journey, I have trusted more to

memory than to notes, of which I made but a very few; never dreaming, when I started, of bringing these pages before the public, or that I was to assume the bold and daring front of an author.

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CHAPTER I.

Embarkation—The Steamer, Hindustan—Her Accommodations and Interior Economy—Baths—Departure from Madras—Rapidity of Progress—First night on Board—Arrival at Point de Galle.

HAVING obtained my furlough, and made every preparation for the journey to England, overland, I secured a suitable cabin for myself and wife, on board one of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company's vessels, the Hindustan; and embarked on the evening of the 19th

November, 1843, bidding farewell, for awhile, to those we loved dearly in the land of the sunny east, to all the comforts and discomforts of an Indian life; to all the pleasures and *disagremens* of military duty; and looking forward, with joyful anticipations, to the still more delightful return to our native land; to a re-union with those from whom we had been sundered for a series of years; to re-visiting those spots rendered dear to us from the recollections of childhood,—happy prospect, indeed; engendering feelings in our breasts, which none, but those who have experienced them, can have any idea of, or express! Many a time and oft, did I sigh for the expiration of my ten years, that I might once more see old England: often have I envied those, whom I saw month after month, embark

and depart from the surf-beat shores of Madras, for the purpose of re-visiting "*that nook-shot-en Isle of Albion,*" that beautiful spot in the ocean's wide expanse, so dear to every Briton—England! What a magical effect does the very sound of that name have upon us all, while gasping under the burning sun of India! How many thoughts flash across us with the rapidity of lightning, when we hear mention of that much-loved country! England is indeed England; and there is no country like her in the whole world, notwithstanding all that may be objectionable in her. Well do I say with the poet,

"England, with all thy faults, I love thee still!"

The Madras Roadsted, on the day I refer to, presented an unusual, and, at the same time, a most exhilarating sight. The

very circumstance of so large a ship of steam coming there, created a bustle and stir amongst the natives, to which they were unaccustomed; but on this occasion, just as the Hindustan entered from the northward, the Bentick (sister vessel daily expected from England) was telegraphed from the southward; and the meeting of these two noble ships brought crowds to the beach, aud was the wonder and admiration of the spectators; when the latter again weighed anchor to proceed to her destined port, sailing round her (as it were) dormant companion; it was indeed a lovely sight.

The scene on board the Hindustan was (as is always the case in every passenger ship) one of bustle and confusion; the arrival of fresh passengers from the shore with their luggage;

the number of visitors; some attracted to the ship from curiosity, to see so beautiful a specimen of art; others, accompanying their relatives and friends to say a last *adieu.* Europeans and natives, Lascars and Hubshees, (sailors and Africans,) all mingled together; while the travellers from the sister presidency, already comfortably settled in their cabins and berths, were walking the decks, or lounged on the numerous seats, talking and laughing away, with lightsome hearts, made still more lightsome by the certainty, in their own minds, of the result of their undertaking. Home! home! home! was the watchword; and home—happy home! predominated in the breasts of every body; all felt the influence! all, excepting those, who were on board but for a short season, and

who were soon to return to the shore. Alas! how often have I felt, what they must have felt, that is, some of them,—that bitter pang, and that sad question, "When will it be my turn to go home? —perhaps, never." But, to proceed: notwithstanding the noise and hubbub caused by the occurrences alluded to, the business of preparing for a start, was gone through. Every man at his station, and the cook (not *at the fore-sheet*, but in the *galley*)* making his preparations, without which, not even we, orientalized Englishmen, could get on. On the arrival on board of the captain, the whistle was sounded and bell rang; and all shore people informed that they must leave the ship: then came the sad

* Cook-room.

farewell! The tear-drop dimming the eye at parting; the last shake of the hand, silently, though warmly pressed, perhaps for ever. Alas! there is no pleasure without its alloy; in this life no pure joys are to be found—truisms which very few of us have not experienced in our onward journey. The boatswain winded his shrill pipe; the anchor was weighed; shore boats cast off; and the gallant Hindustan sprang from her resting-place like a giant to run his course!

I must here beg the reader's attention to a few remarks regarding the vessel in which we were to sojourn for a period. The ship, taken all together, is a splendid one, in every sense of the word. Those more experienced in the mysteries of naval architecture, may think otherwise; still, I may not be far wrong, when I hazard

the opinion, that there is not a vessel in the world, her superior. But there are several objections in her which I cannot help touching upon. Her accommodations for passengers are poor, cramped, and badly ventilated, built with the intentions, evidently, of cramming as many living souls into as small a space as possible. The number of people between decks, to say nothing of the fires in the engine room, render the heat insufferable, in spite of the wind-sails down each hatchway. There are ports, fore and aft, but they are not allowed to be opened at sea. The cabins are so small, that there is scarcely room for *one* individual, far less for two; and it is so dark down below, that you can scarcely see. Those who can afford to pay large sums of money, fare better in point of accommodation; those cabins

are roomy, and tolerably well-lighted; but, the smaller ones and berths are execrable. These numerous little pigeon-holes and corners between decks, with the various passages leading into them, make the whole quite a labyrinth; and it really requires time, patience, and experience, to enable you to find the way to your own dormitory! The bedding, linen, &c., &c., are good and clean; plenty of fresh water, and the cabin servants generally attentive; but the heat, even in the month of November, was dreadful; what it must be in those of the middle of the year, I will leave the reader to imagine, for it is quite out of my power to describe. There is a place, called the *ladies' saloon;* intended, I believe, for the fairer portion of the passengers to sit in during the day—a comfortable

resort in rough, rainy, or hot weather, well ventilated and lighted, and altogether a very desirable lounge. But this said saloon was, during *our* voyage, converted into a nursery; and several of the ladies, whose cabins were in the neighbourhood, made use of it as a sleeping apartment, as well as a toilet-room; to the discomfort, and consequent exclusion therefrom, of those whose dormitories were in other parts of the ship, and who would have been glad to come there, when in any way indisposed, for the purpose of taking their breakfasts, or of lying down on the sofas; but which, they could not do, owing to the presence of dressers and washers, children crying, and servants scolding; a basin full of dirty water in one place, a wet towel in another; articles of night as well as day dress, strewed on the

floor, and combs and brushes, curl-papers and slop-water, bedecking the table; so much for the ladies' saloon. The cuddy is a magnificent room, running as far aft as the stern posts, and as far forward as the situation of the engine-room would permit. I forget the dimensions of this spacious apartment; suffice to say, that it is large enough to hold four tables, with sufficient latitude to admit of the perambulations and running to and fro of the waiters, and a nice walk up and down of a rainy day. The sides, (or to be more explicit, the walls) of this *salle a manger*, are decorated with gaudy *papier mache* clourings, descriptive of various subjects; the staunchions and rudder-head, as well as the mast, (which was in the centre of the cabin) are all painted with flowers in the most

beautifully arranged groups I ever saw, tastefully embellished with fountains and *jettes d'eau,* and other ornaments. The appearance of the whole was superb, when lighted of an evening, which it was with argaund lamps suspended from the ceiling; large mirrors at each end, and book-cases, neatly fitted up, containing useful and entertaining works. The furniture is entirely mahogany, and the fastenings, &c., of bronze. This room was frequented by all. Every one had access to it; that is to say, all first-class passengers; and a most delightful place it was, too, after the grilling (or rather boiling) heat of our little cabins down in the lower regions.

The management of so large and so powerful a machine, crowded as it was with a cargo of passengers, each indivi-

dual person of a different character, and, in most cases, quite strangers to the commander, would appear, and must be so, a task of no small magnitude; and yet every thing was conducted with so much skill and care, as far as the ship herself was concerned, and such attention paid to the comforts, as far as circumstances would admit, of those who were on board, that the most particular observer could not find cause to animadvert upon the one, or the most fastidious be discontented with the other; and yet I have heard many complaints of the captain—some to the following effect: one lady would say, he was not half attentive enough; another would remark on his want of manners, in having omitted to challenge her to take wine at dinner; another complained because

he did not speak to her while on the quarter-deck; and yet, poor man! he was to superintend the working of this enormous ship, look to her powerful machinery, besides dancing attendance upon a bevy of dames fresh from the halls of Garden Reach, or the more magnificent saloons of Vepery and Nungumbaukum, places well known to some of my oriental readers, and consequently not requiring description, but which the uninitiated in in the *locale* of Calcutta or Madras must be informed, are as well known at those cities, as Hyde Park Corner, or Oxford Street, in London.

The duties of the ship were conducted most regularly and efficiently; we knew not when a rope was pulled, or a sail set; no noise of sailors, "Yo, ho-ing;" no words of command; no bawling

through speaking-trumpets; nor any coarse swearing or cursing, so general on board of sailing-craft. Our ears were not saluted with any vulgarisms, nor our nerves tested by any disagreeable noises; all that was heard, and that most indistinctly, was the clanking of the engines; and all that was felt, a sort of vibratory, trembling motion, peculiar to vessels of this description. There was nothing to disturb our reading, writing, or drawing, during the day, nor anything by night, save, occasionally, the daring encroachment of *cockroaches,* or the heated state of our sleeping apartments.

The feeding was excellent; indeed faultless, excepting now and then a corked bottle of claret, and sometimes bad beer; which latter is much complanied of by Indians, whose principal beverage that

inimitable decoction generally is. There always was plenty to satisfy the appetite of the greatest gourmand, or the taste of the most delicate epicure; fresh meat every day, with all sorts of hermetically preserved provisions; vegetables good; and pastry delicious; indeed, a table most handsomely and liberally supplied. The captain and officers most attentive and polite; perfect gentlemen, and of very pleasing and agreeable manners. I cannot say too much regarding our gallant commander. I do not think there was a single person in the ship but what liked him. He had a smile and a word for every one; and ready to answer any questions, or give every information in his power. I regretted exceedingly the day when we had to part from him; there was something in his character worthy of

admiration; the rough and manly sailor blended with the agreeable and polished gentleman; and, I am sure there are many who may peruse these pages, will agree with me in awarding to him the meed of praise which he so justly deserves.

There is a purser on board this ship, whose business is to attend to the supplies, keep accounts, and to have an eye to the expenditure of provisions; in fact, the purveyor to the wants and necessities of those on board. He knew how many sheets and pillow-cases, cabin-boy Jenkins had charge of; how many cakes of white Windsor soap there were in store, and how many pounds of tea were expended by the cuddy steward at the morning and evening meals. He was a dapper little fellow, very attentive to his

work, always on the alert, ready to be useful, or supply the wants of the passengers; a very good fellow was the purser of the good ship Hindustan. He was particularly attached to all those who came under his immediate *surveillance,* could not bear to have fault found with yna of them; and was as peppery as possible, if any complaints were made; preferring sticking to the side of those complained against rather than that of the complainers; however, we have all our faults, and I dare say he was not exempt from the foibles and failings to which the human race is liable.

We had every reason to be satisfied with the whole of the Hindustan—ship, captain, officers, eating, drinking, and sleeping deparments; and where there is satisfaction and contentment on board a-

ship, what more can a man wish for in such a situation?

There are baths on board, both shower and plunging; most delightful of a morning, after melting in our cabins, to be able to enjoy the one or the other; excellent arrangements, which it is a great pity are not adopted in those huge floating hotels, crawling round the Cape for a period of three or four months; and on board of which, if you do wish to have a bathe, you are obliged to stand at the break of the poop or gangway, to be soused by all the sailors with water, taken out of a dirty, greasy tub; as for the poor females, they have no such good luck, most of them, for the whole voyage; but, in the steamer, every one who wished could enjoy the bath without any hindrance.

The anchor weighed, catted and stowed, the word passed to "keep good fires, and let her go full speed;" ropes coiled down, decks cleared, and the course mentioned to the officer of the watch: the bustle and noise of departure subsided into silence; boxes and trunks handed down; the new arrivals vanished to their respective cabins to see every thing comfortable for the night; some with sorrowful hearts, others with a kind of care-for-nothing feeling in their breasts; but all with sensations too peculiar for me to describe. In truth, we were certain that we were now fairly started on our homeward journey, leaving behind us the fast-receding land of our troubles and sorrows, and now wending onward to that happy land, our own "sea-girt isle"—England!

The movements, though the water, of

our gallant *barque,* were most easy; she really "walked the waters like a thing of life;" the sea was smooth, the night was fine, and the waves sparkled with phosphoric brightness, as we passed the foam caused by the splashing of the powerful paddles on either side. I happened to come on deck after having settled every thing in our cabin; and was surprised at the rate we were going—between twelve and thirteen knots an hour! I had been on board steamers, but their progress was snails' pace compared to that of the Hindustan! I never witnessed any thing to equal her speed. The power of five hundred horses brought into action propelling such a vast body at so rapid a rate, is indeed matter for admiration and wonder!

Our first night on board was anything

but a pleasant one. The cabin, which had been engaged, was not at all suited to us, so the next morning I mentioned the circumstance to the captain, who very kindly came down and allowed us to select from amongst the empty ones (and there were many) another, whichever we would perfer—a piece of politeness and kindness on his part, for which I shall ever feel most grateful to him; as we were thereby rendered most comfortable for the rest of the voyage. For fear of the cockroaches (experience having taught us that most vessels in tropical climates swarmed with these abominable creatures) I brought with me some mosquito curtains, expressly made to fit the sleeping berth in our cabin. These I nailed up and fastened to the stancheons, in consequence of which, my wife was enabled to

sleep without disturbance, while I enjoyed my slumbers in the passage outside, spreading my boatcloak on the floor, and taking the pillows from my own berth; this I preferred to sleeping on the open deck, as many of the passengers did, a most dangerous thing in, my humble opinion, exposed as they must be both to the damp dews of the night, and the cold wind blowing upon them: this proceeding was not, however, at all to be wondered at, as the heat in their own dormitories was insufferable; still the doing so was running a great risk. Indeed, it was so hot down below, that I have stood for hours during the night, by my wife's bedside, fanning her to sleep.

After a most delightful passage of two days, we came in sight of the Island of Ceylon; and on the morning of the 22nd

Nov., arrived at Point de Galle; the first stage of our journey, at which place, a supply of coals was to be taken in. The approach to the point is most beautiful and picturesque. The high and lofty mountains in the back; and the bold, rocky shore, with the surf beating high upon it, in the foreground. The tall, graceful cocoa-nut tree, intermingling the jack and peepul. The houses, and frowning battlements, bristling with cannon to the water's edge: "the flag, which braved a thousand years," &c., &c., flying boldly at the flag-staff mast-head; the little harbour with coasting vessels riding at anchor; boats rowing to and fro, all added to the beauty and liveliness of the scene. The arrival of so huge a leviathan as our steamer, amongst the small craft, caused them to jump about as if for very joy at her coming.

It was hinted to us that we had better not remain on board whilst the ship was "*coaling*," as all the cabins and saloons would be shut up to prevent the coal dust from penetrating into them; and any body staying during the process, would be covered with filth, if not suffocated; so we made up our little parcels in our carpet bags, and the whole posse of passengers went on shore, amounting to between seventy and eighty in number, presenting a goodly array, and affording excellent opportunities for the hotel and inn-keepers to make a little money; and the new arrivals to see a little of the country, which perhaps they would never have a chance of seeing again.

CHAPTER II.

Point de Galle—The Town and Fort—Malay Riflemen—Church—Natives of the Country—Coal Depôt—A Drive into the Interior—A Night on Shore—A Morning Walk on the Ramparts.

Galle has been already described by more able pens than mine, consequently any lengthened detail, on my part, would not only be useless, but troublesome to the reader. However, I cannot help making mention, in some small degree, of a place I had visited; and which forms a feature in the narrative I am here recording.

We landed in the morning as soon as the boats could be lowered; some of us, rather than wait, proceeding in those from the shore—queer things in their way; so narrow, that a man of good proportions can barely stand in one, excepting sideways; and kept afloat by means of an out-rigger, thereby preventing the frail bark from upsetting. The outriggers render them so buoyant, that I have seen these boats cross the high surf, at Madras, with sail set, in perfect safety. The landing-place, at Galle, is anything but a convenient one; a wooden jetty running out, into the water, covered by a *pandaul*, or shed of cocoa-nut leaves; without any stairs or steps to enable people to get out of their boats; the only way to do so being a desperate jump up, as the boat lifted with the swell;

running the risk either of a wetting, or of breaking your legs against the beams. How the ladies managed, I cannot conceive; though we did contrive to land safely, by hook or by crook; luckily there were no casualties. I wonder the authorities do not make some sort of improvements, seeing that Galle is now become a place of such resort, every month bringing a tide of people landing and embarking; the want of stairs is certainly a great inconvenience. On gaining a footing on this jetty, we were instantly surrounded by a rabble of greasy, pawn-chewing Chingalese, Moplays, and Lubbees; (the two latter denominations being peculiar to a sect of Mahomedans, generally merchants, sea-faring men, sailors, and coolies, to be found all over Southern India); all wrangling, bawling,

and pushing, in efforts to seize hold of our carpet bags and bundles—poor men seeking for employment wherewith to procure a morsel to eat.

The entrance to the town was anything but agreeable; indeed, we were most wofully disappointed; such dirt and filth I never saw in all my life. Passing through a gate-way in the wall of the fortifications, we entered the principal barrack-square, and from thence passed on to the main street—a narrow, dirty declivity, with mean-looking houses on either side, almost all in the old Dutch style. We went to what we were told was the hotel! Such a place! Not a table or a chair; one old bedstead with tattered curtains, and a bench with three legs, being the principal furniture in the large room; and the smaller one being occu-

pied by a whole bevy of tawny-coloured females; who, headed by a grey, one-eyed old creature, were going through the very pleasurable task of washing clothes; and this was the hotel. One of them I mean, for we were told there were many. I asked, if we could have a dinner? The *maitre d'hote*, a long-legged, Ceylon-born Dutchman, bowed and scraped, and gave us the consolatory information, that there was nothing in the house; but that if our *honours* wished, some dinner could be prepared. This was pleasant, too; so I made up my mind to go in search of some old friends, whom I knew to be residing at Galle; (having been on the Island when a boy,) bidding my wife stay there until my return. I was fortunate enough to find out the residence of one, whom I had known as a child, and

who received me most warmly; desiring me to send for my wife immediately; and giving me a room, &c. &c. His carriage was dispatched, and in due course of time we were comfortably settled; glad was I indeed to be able to take her to some respectable place. We were most hospitably entertained, and were as happy as we could possibly be. After dressing, I walked out to have a further look at the place. The more I saw of it, the more was I disappointed. The houses appeared to me to be very old and ruinous; and, as I observed before, built in a style so peculiarly different to what I had been accustomed to see in India; nothing neat; no system; nothing that could attract the eye, to look at with any feelings of pleasure. I never saw such dirty streets or roads; they were

badly made, with grass growing on them; full of ruts, and holes; gutters choked up with dry leaves; palings here and there broken down; in fact, Galle is nothing to be compared to any of our neat cantonments in India. I went on the fortifications; there, again, was I disappointed. The ramparts and parapets appeared to be in a very dilapidated state; the interior overgrown with rank grass; the *tracing* of the works apparently very poor; and the whole, such as in time of war, I would not feel at all ambitious to have to defend against an enemy.

The troops on duty, during our stay, were details from the Ceylon rifle corps. These men are recruited from the Straits of Malacca and Singapore, and from families residing in the island—fine fellows, stout and muscular, and no doubt

worthy of their salt. They moved smartly on their posts as sentries, carrying their rifles in a soldier-like manner; but there were faults which I could not help finding; and which, I beg I may be excused remarking upon in this place; not from any invidious feeling, but for the sake of observation. It is merely this:—that I thought these men were too *heavily* clad for *light* infantry; they appeared too much hampered up with their clothing and accoutrements; their head-gear too large, and their pouches bulky. I witnessed them at drill, going through light movements; they seemed to me to move slowly and with difficulty, as if there was a something to impede them in running. This would not be the case were they not so overburdened, as it were; their coats and trowsers seemed too tight for

them, and I frequently saw the men as they were *extending* or *closing*, putting their hands up to their heads, to hold on their caps; or clutching their pouches behind; both which have a very unsoldier-like appearance, and prove the truth of my observation. I have found this to be the case in my own regiment, and attributed it entirely to the objections above alluded to. Anything calculated to encumber the soldier, acting as a *skirmisher* renders him perfectly useless: for instead of attending to his duty, he is constantly employed in adjusting his cap, or doing something he ought not to be thinking of. I trust my military readers will see the force of my remarks, and give them that support which their justness and importance requires. The barracks, for these riflemen, are very good; and upon

the same plan as those for European soldiery. I presume, the men with wives and families have separate accommodations in a *parcherry*.

There is a Church at Galle, but I had not an opportunity of visiting it. I was, however, informed, that it was a very respectable one, in point of size and structure, and that the reverend clergyman was a man worthy of his calling; and in every way calculated for his responsible situation.

Galle is considered healthy ; being on the coast and exposed to the influence of the sea-breezes, which in warm climates drive away all contagious vapours in the air. It is a dirty place, however, and I am surprised at its being so healthy as I was told it was.

The natives, Chingalese, are a very

different race of beings to what those of the mainland are. They are more of the Malay or *Mongolian* species; though I have seen many very fine handsome fellows amongst them. Their peculiarities of dress, and the *feminine* way in which they do their hair, make them appear strange to us who have been habituated to far different modes and costumes. They never wear any turbans, or clothes on their heads, that is, very seldom, which, instead, are well greased, and tied in an enormous round ball behind, surmounted by a huge tortoise-shell comb. These people are much addicted to eating *pawn-leaf*, in consequence of which, most of their teeth are decayed away from the quantity of *chunam* (lime) they mix with this *dirty delicacy*. I believe the Chingalese are much given to drinking intoxicating liquors; and *arrack*

being the principle article in that line, the generality of them are able to afford to take a dram or two during the day; a draught of brandy being a treat, which the more wealthy only are able to indulge in. They are very ingenious and crafty workmen, good jewellers, and excellent hands at workboxes of sandle-wood and tortoise-shell, some of the latter being most elegantly finished, with a high polish worthy of a London or Parisian artisan. We were of course deluged with all these things, some very tempting; but were unable to make any outlay, as we had brought but a small supply of money; some purchases were however made, and the rest turned out, a movement which they did not seem at all to understand.

The generality of the Chingalese inhabitants at Galle, are converted Christians,

of the Romish persuasion, queer fellows, with their beads and crucifixes. I asked one of them why he thought it better to be a Roman Catholic in preference to any other persuasion? "Oh, sir," said he, "that is very proper religion, suppose I get drunk, I give padre six-pence, and he tell me go get a drunk again;" very convenient for both parties, no doubt; like master, like man!

Point de Galle is the first place after leaving Madras where the steamers take in a supply of coals. The company have, consequently, established an agent there, in the master attendant, who superintends their shipment, and there is always a large quantity laid along the beach, ready to be put into boats at a moment's notice. I do not exactly know where these coals come from, if by colliers from England,

they must be brought at an enormous expense!

We spent a very pleasant day altogether at Galle. In the afternoon, we took a drive in my friend's carriage, into the interior, on the great mail coach road to Colombo. I never recollect having been so pleased, as I was on the occasion I allude to. It made up for all the draw-backs of dirty town, bad houses, worse roads, and rotten fortifications, already expatiated upon. The scenery all along was very beautiful. Neat cottages, and huts, gardens, plantations, and enclosures on either side of the road. Tall trees, and neat hedge-rows, wood and forest, hill and dale, mountain and valley, running streams, and brawling brooks, the roaring of the surf, with the restless sea beyond, completed the picture, which had some-

thing grand and beautiful in it, as well as rural, and pleasant to the eye. We drove for about three or four miles, enjoying all we saw vastly; but were obliged to return in consequence of a shower of rain, which came upon us in torrents; thus effectually throwing a cloak (a very wet one too) over our pleasures. I would not have missed this delightful jaunt for anything. I was indeed much gratified, and came home to my friend's house, perfectly charmed with all I had seen. Some there were who made sketches of various parts of the place. I made one or two hurried ones, nothing particular, but which, however, I have since lost or mislaid.

We went to bed in the evening, after a hearty supper, quite worn out with our day's work, and glad to seek a little rest; but, alas! there was no rest for either man

or wife! The mosquitoes were dreadful! I do believe they must have been as large as wasps, for they made a tremendous noise, and stung like so many fiends! I tied a handkerchief over my face, stuffed cotten into my ears, kept on my gloves and stockings, but in vain! they pierced through every thing, so that sleep was quite out of the question. We were most dreadfully dealt with by these demons of the night. I have been pestered by mosquitoes, (and that is a common ordeal to undergo in India) but, I own, I never was so tormented in all my life! Glad, indeed, were we both, when the day dawned upon us, for no sooner did the first faint gleams of light appear through the windows, than our night companions vanished like so many hob-goblins; and then only were we able to have a good sleep, a pleasure of but

short duration, as are all other pleasures; but such as it was, we were most thankful.

After a hasty toilet, I went out to breathe a little fresh air on the Ramparts; the morning was fine, and the coolness delightful; but still were my olfactory nerves assailed by the disagreeable smell of fish salted, hanging up to dry close to the flag staff; a very unmilitary exhibition, such as I never witnessed before on the walls of a fort. I wandered along the ramparts, my feet getting soaked by the wet on the long grass; and came upon a large heap of rubbish on one of the "*ramps*," dirt and filth of all sorts, sufficient to create a plague. But I must say no more, lest I draw down the vengeance of the Point de Galle people upon my head. I have to apologize, however, for my descanting so lengthily upon these objection-

ables, and I hope I may be pardoned when I say, that my remarks are made purely from what I saw with my own eyes, in the hopes that should these pages even be perused by any of my friends at Galle, *something* may be done, if not already done, to render the place a *little* more like a military station, which it certainly was not when I visited it in November, 1843.

CHAPTER III.

Departure from Point de Galle—Life on Board the Steamer—The Maldive Islands—Socotra—Cape Guardafui — The Wreck of the Memnon — Approach to Aden—The Coast and Scenery.

Bidding farewell to Galle, we were again afloat at about twelve o'clock. The ship underweigh, we steamed along the coast most delightfully. The day was fine, and the breeze light, the good ship moved through the briny waves, "majestically slow," at first, and then at her usual rapid rate, soon leaving Galle and all its

beauties far behind us. Glad, indeed, were we, once more to be on our journey, which brought us, every moment, nearer and nearer to our long wished for home.

Our life, on board the Hindustan, was a very joyous one; plenty to eat and drink; many ways of amusement; many methods of killing time, which flew by us as fast as did our ship through the immense space of water. I will here attempt to give some description of what we did with ourselves during this short, but truly pleasant passage. The routine was generally the same every day, but still was there something fresh, something new to amuse us; our pace was so rapid that we could not help coming upon some novelty on each coming day, to excite attention, admiration, or pleasure. Our good captain was almost always on deck, talking, laugh-

ing, or explaining this or that: there was always abundance of employment for the curious, stores of information for those who chose to seek it. We had a good supply of books in the library, and the captain was not at all chary of his maps; many were the pleasant hours I spent in his cabin looking over them. Our doctor was a clever fellow, a good hand at his pencil and brush (as well as at his profession), he was a man who had travelled a great deal, and possessed a vast fund of information. Some of our party would thus pass the time in the early part of the day after breakfast, in drawing and water colouring; others would be reading, or studying the maps, and tracing the way we were pursuing; some would play at *chess*, or at *draughts*; and some pass their time at *picquet* or *ecarte*; there were a

few, who did nothing but eat, drink, and sleep, or lounge about the ship with their hands in their pockets, but these were only a few. We breakfasted at half-past eight o'clock, luncheon at twelve, dinner at half-past three, tea at half-past six, and there was grog and biscuits from eight till ten at night; then there was tea and coffee served early in the moning, with biscuits, bread and butter, or toast. I must not omit mentioning that soda water bottles, were popping like *file firing* from morning to night; nothing was to be supplied after ten P. M. excepting in cases of sickness; though this rule was never strictly acted up to, for I have heard the "*port-wine club*" (established on board by some of the passengers, meeting every night to discuss matters of importance, and port wine negus!) hard at work long

after that hour. Preparatory to each meal, there were two bugles sounded, like those at a mess on shore, which gave us ample time to dress, &c.

On Sundays, divine service was performed in the great saloon; all hands, passengers, officers, and crew, engineers and stokers, attending, nicely dressed. The doctor read the service, the captain acting as clerk. We had prayers twice a day, and, indeed, "'twas a pleasing sight to see" so many assembled to join prayer and praise to the throne of grace; in adoring and worshipping Him who rules the winds and waves, and by whose guidance alone, we were enabled to pursue our course in safety across the waters of the mighty deep.

The store, or baggage rooms, were opened twice a week, every Friday, and a

paper was circulated to enable those who wanted any trunk or box to put down their names, and the numbers of the articles required. This was a great convenience; for we were thus allowed access to our baggage, by which means we could obtain a supply of clean clothes, and put away those not required. Every assistance was afforded by the officers and men on these occasions, indeed it was the case always. I never met with a set of people more willing and obliging than those of the Hindustan, from the captain to the lowest cabin boy.

I must not forget to mention that when the weather would admit of it, we had dancing or singing on deck, almost every night. Our band consisted of violins, clarionet, and bugle; performed by the cuddy servants. Some of the lady pas-

sengers used to sing very nicely, accompanied by the guitar; and we had several very good "*trios*," and "*quartettes*," which were well performed by the vocalists.

We were now approaching the Maldive Islands, which lay right in our course. We had fine weather, so that we were able to see most of them, and passed close to one or two—very picturesque indeed. We could distinguish the houses of the inhabitants, the luxuriant trees close to the beach, boats out fishing, and several of the larger vessels under sail. 'Twas a pretty sight; and we were all on deck with our glasses looking at each island, as we sailed by them in rapid succession; the sea was as smooth as glass, almost a calm, still our good ship glided along at the rate of about twelve knots an hour.

Nothing particular occurred till we neared the coast of Arabia, on the one hand, and Africa on the other; when we passed the island of Socotra, and came in sight of the much-dreaded Cape of Guardafui. Socotra was formerly a depôt for coals, but of late it was done away with, and Aden fixed upon as a most convenient position for *fuelling*.

Cape Guardafui has been rendered an object of interest, owing to the lamentable disaster, in the loss of that beautiful steam-frigate Memnon, belonging to the Honorable East India Company; an occurrence, which at the time, created a great deal of talk and discussion; and which must be fresh in the recollection of many of my readers. We passed this dreaded Cape in broad daylight, and

consequently had a good look at it. The land *trended* high and bold, presenting a bluff object, which it appeared to us impossible to mistake for anything else than land. What the officer of the watch on the deck of the Memnon could have been dreaming of, to take it for a *bank of clouds*, is a secret he himself can divulge; for what we saw, seemed plain enough; and had there been any doubts in that officer's mind, particulary after what he had been told by some one on deck; it seems most unaccountably strange, that he should not have stopped the vessel's speed, until those doubts had been cleared up. It is sad, indeed, that such accidents should occur; which might generally be avoided by a little care and foresight; running against Cape Guardafui, was exactly like a man knocking

his head against a wall with his eyes wide open.

Steaming along very pleasantly, we approached the land in the neighbourhood of Aden; there was something grand and sublime in the scenery of this part of our voyage, which I cannot, I am afraid, describe. I never beheld anything so magnificent. Something new, and more calculated to draw forth exclamations of wonder than that last seen, appeared in panoramic succession, as we followed up the bendings of the coast; promontory, and headland, frowning precipice, and shelving beach; all presented themselves, one after the other, like magic; exhibiting fresh features in the landscape almost every moment.

It is well known, that the country bordering upon the sea, near and about

Aden, is of volcanic origin. The land was quite bare of vegetation, except here and there some small stunted bushes or patches of grass, peculiar to the place and soil in which they grew. The depth of the water is all along very great, so much so, that our vessel, nearly two thousand tons burthen, was able to sail close to the shore; and so beautifully clear, that we could see for several fathoms downwards. As usual, the captain and officers were busy in explaining everything we saw to the passengers—marks of politeness, not generally exhibited on board of ships of any sort; the Hindustan was certainly a glaring exception to the general rule.

We neared Aden by day, so that we saw all that was to be seen to great advantage; the more particularly so, as we

had the benefit of the captain's experience in the locality of every part of the coast worthy of notice. I must here remark, that the whole of this coast, and that of the Red Sea, was surveyed by himself; having been sent on that duty by order of the Indian government, in a sloop of war. The accuracy of the survey he made, and the approbation consequent thereon, which he received from the scientific and learned of his profession, are both well known: to say aught more on the subject, therefore, would be superfluous. I cannot, however, help observing, that we owe the *entire* safety with which we performed that portion of our homeward journey, to the indefatigable exertions of our good captain, in completing a task which has proved of such inestimable benefit to the Indian

world. I believe he was for several years employed on this survey; the enormity of his labour can therefore be better imagined than described.

CHAPTER IV.

Aden—The Harbour—Colliers—Situation of the Town — Landing — The Hotel—A Dinner on Shore—The Place in a Military point of view—Native Arabs and Jews—Donkeys and Mules—A Ride to the Town—Departure.

We arrived at Aden on the twenty-ninth of November 1843, after having feasted our eyes on the beautiful scenery described in the last chapter. The weather was certainly in our favour. We had nothing to complain of. The anchorage for our ship (and indeed for other ships as well,)

was not visible until we rounded a jutting point, and then a lively scene presented itself to our view. The little harbour had several craft of different sizes at anchor, all apparently from England; which they proved to be, for they were nothing but colliers; some empty, and others almost gunwale under-water. There was also the government coaling vessel, a broken back hulk, doing duty as guard ship; but more worthy of firewood than anything else; how she kept afloat I know not.

I was surprised to hear that most of the colliers at anchor in the harbour, took so many as seven months to reach port! Some came in wretched plight; all hands on board laid up with the scurvy—leaky, rotten, and more sinking than floating. How people in England can turn out such

wretched craft, or the authorities *allow* of it, I cannot imagine; the *amor mummi* does indeed drive men to many ill-judged, foolish, as well as cruel acts. That of sending out vessels in the state I mention, speaks so forcibly for itself, that it would be superfluous for me to make any further comment or remark.

As soon as the steamer was at anchor, several of the passengers landed. A Parsee came on board, speaking very favourably of a hotel; which subsequently turned out to be his own—the only one there. I desired him to secure rooms for us; but told him I could not then land, as it was late. We therefore slept on board that night, and the next morning proceeded on shore. The only buildings to be seen were, the coal depôt, and this self-same much-expatiated-upon hotel, the

town and station being on the other side; that is to say, about three miles distant from where we were. The pull to the shore is not a quarter of a mile, so deep was the water in the harbour, the landing place is shingle, the boats were run aground, and the men carried us on their backs, while the ladies stepped on shore by means of a board.

I must now describe the hotel of Aden, such as it was, to give the reader some idea of the nature of an establishment bearing that designation, in such an out-of-the-way place; into which we flocked like so many emancipated beings, let loose from the confinement of a ship.

The building, if it can be so termed, was a huge composition of bricks and mortar; wooden posts and logs of timber, most strangely put together; a style of

architecture peculiarly modern, or at least such as is not generally known to the civilized world. There were out-houses of various denominations, as also a kind of shop, in which were vended, articles of wearing apparel, eatables, and drinkables, all abominable trash, and priced enormously high—a very sink of imposition and cheatery.* The hotel consisted of one long mess-room and verandah in front, with large wings for bed-rooms. There was vast room for improvement, however, which it is to be hoped, the worthy Parsee's fast-filling money-bag, will one

* Since writing the above, I have been informed that this said hotel has been discontinued; consequent, no doubt, upon the Parsee having made sufficient money to enable him to return to Bombay; though a very different cause has been assigned to his quitting.

of these days induce him to make. He seemed to be thriving well too, for I never saw such a fat, consequential, one-eyed rogue in all my life. Taking the hotel as a whole, it was tolerable enough ; I have been in worse ones in Madras.

It was agreed upon amongst the passengers, previous to arriving at Aden, that, if it were possible, at such an out-of-the-way place, we should give our worthy captain and his officers a dinner, to mark the feelings of thankfulness which we all experienced, at their unvaried politeness and attention to us. So, as soon as we landed, a committee of managment was formed, Parsee's stores were inspected, wines tasted, and approved of; the dinner ordered; the invitation was given and accepted; and we sat down that self-same evening, in number about eighty-five! I

confess I never was so agreeably surprised as at the fare which was placed on the table on this occasion; nothing could have been better. The eatables good, and the wines excellent. We had the cuddy servants from the ship to wait. Old cock-eyed Parsee deserved great credit, and we were all pleased. The dinner went off well; and there were some good speeches made, suitable to the occasion; our worthy president giving the health of the skipper, his officers and ship; and the skipper returning thanks in a proper manner. There was plenty of fun outside too, for some of the jolly tars seeing their captain and officers enjoying themselves, thought it not wrong to do so too, and so went to the tap, and ordered beer and brandy, right and left, desiring Parsee to "put it down to the gentlemen's account." One of them, the

wag of the crew, observing "as how if the skipper and officers be treated, they did not see why they should not be so too; indeed, their honours, the gentlemen passengers, and all of 'em good ones too, would not grudge poor Jack a drop o'liquor to drink their honours' health with." The consequence may be imagined: they got as drunk as fiddlers, and were carried on board in disgrace. There were one or two of the *softer sex,* domestics attached to families, who were not *over* steady, when they went up the gangway ladder; indeed, one, I know for certain, was obliged to be boused up with a "bowline-knot" round her waist, by way of a sling. Thus ended our dinner. There was smoking and drinking; grilled bones, and toddy, going on till a late hour; visitors from Cantonments came in, and enjoyed

themselves of course; some, to show how well they could ride, brought their horses up the steps right into the mess-room! A pretty hubbub there was at the royal hotel, Aden, on the night of the 29th November, 1843.

Aden, in a military point of view, is considered, in every sense of the word, to be a most important station; a kind of second Gibraltar; a key to the Red Sea, of which the straits of Babelmandeb, is the gateway. Its position is admirably capable of defence. The fortifications are rendered powerful by the natural situations of the heights; and the batteries, constructed, since held by the British, well calculated to resist the attacks of an enemy from any quarter. Government see the importance of this post, and have consequently come to the determinaton of

holding it, by extending and strengthening the works, for which purpose experienced officers of engineers have been sent to survey and report upon plans for fortifying the place better than it is. However, all the fortifications are of no use, unless there are sufficient troops to defend them; at present there are barely two thousand men stationed there in garrison. What would they do against twenty-five or thirty thousand Arabs? Recent disasters should be warnings to the Government against leaving important posts *badly* guarded by a paucity of troops. Our Indian possessions are now become so extensive, that really unless an increase of troops takes place, we shall not be able to hold what we have acquired. Our men are over-worked now-a-days—one regiment doing the duty that three used to

formerly, and coming events casting their shadows before them, it behoves our honorable masters not only to increase the number of their troops, but to add more OFFICERS to their regiments. The present state of affairs calls loudly for more regiments, and unless there are more, I repeat, we shall not be able to keep what we have as our own; if we do, it will be a most difficult matter.

The natives of this part of the world are a queer compound of Arab, African, and Jew. They are decidedly of African origin, from their blackness and cast of countenance; still they speak a strange jargon of Arabic. They are the most odd looking animals I ever saw, as black as Lucifer, and yet with red hair, all frizzed and knotted. Nearly naked, poor, miserable-looking objects, apparently in the

lowest state of destitution. It was with the greatest difficulty that they could be restrained from snatching our bundles out of our hands to carry up to the hotel. There were also some loathsome creatures diametrically opposite, in point of colour and features, to these dark-browed savages; these, upon inquiry, I found to be people of Jewish extraction. They had decidedly the Jewish phisiognomy; and from their peculiar garb, dirty appearance, and being covered with disease, they seemed as if they really belonged to the persecuted race of Israel. I declare I quite pitied these poor fellows, they looked so miserable; and the rest of the natives treat them most shamefully. We saw several instances of it ourselves whilst among them. I did not meet with, or see, one well-dressed person

in the crowd, which stood before our hotel from morning till night; they were all of one family, and poverty was their parent. A great portion of these miserable fellows earned a precarious livelihood by means of their donkeys and mules. The front of the hotel was thronged with them; such quadrupeds and such gear! However there were no lack of customers all day; for we hired them and galloped off in parties of three and four, to see the town. Ladies and gentlemen, men-servants and maids, Jack-tar and cabin-boy, all hurried away as if they were mad! Little black boys, with red woolly heads, running behind, hooting, bawling, laying their cudgels into the hind-quarters of their wretched half-starved beasts, and wrangling with each other in their (to us) strange language. I never beheld such a medley;

and was quite amused at the sight. There were several falls amongst the riders, much to the delight of those who were more fortunate.

There is nothing worthy of remark in the town. We saw barracks, magazines, quarters for officers, lines for the sepoys, and a bazaar. Altogether, the place looked much more business-like and military than Point de Galle. No fish hanging up to dry near the flag-staff, nor any heaps of rubbish on any of the works; nothing of the sort. Here all was *comme il faut.*

We passed an uncomfortable night at Aden; for, added to the noise of revellers singing, "We wont go home till morning," we were disturbed by swarms, (not of mosquitoes, but) of rats running about the rooms, scampering over our faces,

and playing all sorts of tricks, much to the dismay of the ladies, and the amusement of the males. It was truly laughable to hear the various expressions of horror and fright, the screams and cries from the different rooms. The rats seemed to enjoy the joke, too; for they never ceased "till day-light did appear;" when they and the revellers departed to their beds, I suppose.

After paying our bills, the next morning we all repaired on board the steamer. A fresh supply of coals had been taken in during our absence on shore, and at about two o'clock in the afternoon we were once more under weigh, plying along right merrily towards the Red Sea, that far-famed inlet of the Indian Ocean, by which means we were now approaching the end of our journey. We were glad to leave

Aden, (and that magnificent hotel); for it is a dirty hole, after all. I hope I may never pass another night on its shores.

CHAPTER V.

Entrance to the Red Sea—The Straits of Babelmandeb—Grand Scenery by Moonlight—The Coast—Mounts Sinai and Horeb.

THE feelings which predominated in my breast, as we neared the entrance to the Red Sea, were of a mingled nature. Delight and pleasure, in seeing what I had long wished to see; and awe, at the thoughts of beholding this famed spot, mentioned so often in Sacred History, the very sea, over which passed thousands of souls through a dry passage, by means of

a divine miracle, wrought by the hands of the Almighty Jehovah! This was then, the Red Sea, of which I had heard and read so much; and I was actually on the point of going over the same space of water, which had for thousands and thousands of years rolled their restless swell from the gigantic waves of the ocean. It is indeed worth while paying a little extra to come home overland; instead of loitering round the Cape, seeing nothing scarcely the whole voyage excepting a vast expanse of sky and water! By the former route, what food for contemplation, study, and amusement, presents itself daily! What wonderful relics of antiquity! What celebrated countries! All that the traveller sees amply compensates for any extra outlay of money for the passage, though I may here remark, that after all,

the difference in point of net amount is not so great. For, in the Cape voyage, whatever you may save in paying for your cabin, you have to expend in an outfit for four months, exclusive of cabin furniture, &c. &c., all this is provided for on board the steamer, and you do not require linen and clothes for more than forty days, (if any detention takes place, you can have things washed at Malta, Alexandria or Cairo) so that you are not put to any extra expense on that score. I really do not think that there is much difference between the two in a pecuniary point of view; and as to time, going home round the Cape, you are an age, and by the overland route you are in England almost before you are aware of it.

The Red Sea is entered by way of the Straits of Babelmandeb, a narrow and

consequently a difficult passage, to the inexperienced mariner, I believe; however, if the vessel is kept in mid-channel there is plenty of water for the largest to go through. We had ample; and dashed past it in gallant style; the captain had informed as almost to a minute at what hour of the night we should pass it. He was never out in his reckoning, so certain was he of the progress his ship made, and so well acquainted with the currents &c. &c., of the seas he traversed. He told us that we should pass through the Straits at about twelve o'clock at night, recommending us to be on the *qui-vive,* as it was a sight worth looking at; so just as the *bell eight* rang through the midnight air, up we all rushed, a strange multitude of beings, in our night habiliments; men, women, and children; all crowding to the

fore part of the ship, their teeth chattering with cold, slip-shod and stocking-less, to have a good peep at these much talked of Straits. There they were, certainly, with high land on either side; and as we rushed through with wonderful velocity, I almost fancied we could touch the land, so narrow is the passage. It was a lovely night, too; the moon was shining in the clear, cloudless sky, and shed her mild rays on the scene around us; some parts of the land, standing out boldly as each height was lighted up by the moonbeams which fell upon them; and others, thrown into dark and sombre shade, a picture worthy the pencil of an artist; indeed, there was to me something vastly solemn in the sight we were gazing upon; the dead stillness of the night; the high land; the moon, and stars glittering in the

heavens; the mad waves of the deep blue sea, dancing wildly as we dashed by them, and our immense steam ship careering along as if impatient of her own speed! When shall I see the like again? We returned to our sleeping rooms, highly gratified with what we had seen, vowing we would not have missed it for the whole world!

True is it that we may admire the beauties of landscape, depicted by the able pencils of celebrated limners; I have seen and admired many too in my time; but view them in their pristine state, as made by the hands of the Almighty, and then is the time when we can really appreciate them, as well as acknowledge the power and skill of the Creator.

The coast along which we passed, presented many features worthy of remark.

There was the low beach, bright and dazzling, extending for miles without any break—the wide sandy plain, reaching as far as the eye could see, with here and there a slight undulation caused by a hillock or two—no signs of vegetation whatsoever, excepting what eked out a miserable existence from the moisture of the salt water. On one knell, we did catch a glimpse of stunted trees; but they were few indeed. Again did the eye rest upon lofty mountains and craggy rocks; some of the former bearing names famous in story; in the present day of little or no importance, except to the traveller, who looks at them with wonder and amazement for the moment only, and then passes them by without any further concern; yet still will they remain, as lasting monuments of days gone by; showing to successive

generations, that such do exist; and rearing their hoary heads to the skies, despite the tempest and the storm, and continuing to do so until time shall be no more!

Amongst the numerous mountains and hills which presented themselves to our view, that of Sinai, and of Horeb, were conspicuous to the northward, almost a-head of us. I gazed upon them in silent astonishment. "Is it possible," I exclaimed, "that I now see before me Mount Sinai?—that fearful place, from whence the great God, amidst thunder-clap and lightning-flash, gave to his chosen people the Law? Am I right; or is it but a dream?" Yes! there was Sinai before me; no dream; but a reality that awed me into a feeling of religious fear which I cannot deseribe! I am sorry

to say, that the atmosphere was rather hazy, so that we could not distinctly see that celebrated mountain. I hope the time is not far distant when I shall behold it once more, and I trust that many will be as fortunate as I was.

There are several religious institutions in the immediate neighbourhood. One, at Mount Sinai, is a monastery of Maronite monks. The sacred edifice, for sake of security from tribes of wandering freebooters, is surrounded by high walls; nobody being permitted to have ingress or egress by any other mode than that of being let down or pulled up by baskets. I believe this is called the "Convent of St. Catherine." What good those secluded enthusiasts do in such out of the way places, I cannot tell; though I must suppose that they do as much there, as Roman

Catholics do any where else—none at all. The worthy friars, I doubt not, have very comfortable snug berths of it; make rapid fortunes by their exactions, and exturn to their native country, and to the world, to enjoy themselves; perhaps in the same way as our Indian fore-fathers were wont to do in days gone by; happy days too, when a cadet could go out, shake the far famed *pagoda tree,* and return to England as rich as a Jew, and make John Bull believe that all the wealth he had acquired had been so, honestly! But, "*tempora mutantur,*" and I suppose it will be so with those self-same friars one of these days.

CHAPTER VI.

The Red Sea — Intense Cold — Mocha — Judda, Mecca, and Medina—Pharoah's Bath—The supposed Spot where the Israelites crossed—Moses' Wells, &c.—The advantage of Steam in bad weather.

We had now entered the Red Sea; land was visible on either side of us, and as we went further in, the opening at the Straits of Babelmandeb seemed to close upon us like the shutting of a door, we found ourselves, as it were, land-locked, and moving on the surface of an exten-

sive lake. We had the wind "right a-head," notwithstanding which, our gallant ship made way most undauntedly, ploughing the waves with apparently no difficulty. No sooner had we passed the Straits than it became intensely cold. I say *intensely*, because it was so to us, coming so recently from a warm climate. The wind drove against us in such a manner, that we certainly did feel quite different to what we had hitherto done; some of us shivering as if seized with a fit of the ague. It was quite amusing to see the change which had come over the greater portion of our party. People who had before shunned the neighbourhood of the engine-room, as if it had been the infernal regions, would now be seen crowding to the place, to warm themselves; others stood round the huge chimney with their

backs to it, as if they were standing before a fire, exclaiming, "Oh, how deuced cold it is!" Ladies, who had the day previous appeared in muslins, and other light dresses, now came on deck in silk attire, with muff and tippet, boa, and comforter, looking as frigid as possible; while those of the opposite sex rummaged their portmanteaux to bring out great coats and boat-cloaks, worsted stockings, and gloves; things which they had not the slightest idea they would be so soon obliged to use. I thought it delightful, and exposed myself to the cold with pleasure, as a treat, after so long a grilling; it was indeed most pleasant, and I walked the deck until my blood glowed within me from the exercise. It is worth while returning to a cold climate, after having been in a warm one for any length of

time. Can there be any comparison between the two?

We passed Mocha early the next day; that place so well known to the whole world, for its produce. The very mention of it makes one think of a cup of coffee! Some one on board declared he thought he could smell the coffee—whoever did so must either have had strong smelling powers, or have been endowed with a very fertile imagination.

The next places we passed were Judda, Mecca, and Medina; all three of consequence, and more particularly the two last, to the Moslem community;—one, the birth-place of their prophet Mahomed, and the other, where he died and was buried. Mecca and Medina are both frequented by large numbers of the Mussulmans who make pilgrimages from all

parts of the eastern world; thinking that the circumstance of their doing so absolves them from all their sins, and gives them an entrance into the abodes of the blessed; and whosoever returns to his country after having been a pilgrimage, is looked upon as, and called, a *Hadjee*—poor infatuated beings! that they should be thus deceived.

Mecca is situated in a valley, said to be quite devoid of vegetation. The head man of the place is a priest, who earns no mean livelihood by donations from Mahomedan grandees and others who visit him. There is a famous *musjid*, or temple, at Mecca, with forty-two doors, some of which are covered with silver and gold. In the neighbourhood is a hill, on the summit of which the traveller is shown a cave, where, it is said, the Great

Prophet was wont to retire to perform his devotions. It is also affirmed by the Moslem sages, that it was at this spot the angel Gabriel brought him a portion of the Koran. A short distance from the shrine, which is in the centre of the temple above mentioned, is pointed out the spot where Abraham was buried; and about two or three miles from the sacred city is a hill, upon which he was prepared to immolate his son Isaac.

There is nothing worthy of remark in Medina, excepting that it is equally as much the sink of fanaticism as Mecca.

Come we next on the coast to a place, known to, and shown by, the natives, as *Pharoah's Bath.* How his Egyptian Majesty could have had a bathing-place there, I cannot conceive; at all events,

his *last* was in the midst of the Red Sea, when in pursuit of the Israelites.

The supposed spot where the wonderful miracle of a passage being opened to afford them a means of escaping their enemy was executed, was pointed out to us by our Captian. I shall never forget my feelings on the occasion. It was Sunday; we had had service in the saloon, and were walking the decks, looking out for this celebrated locality, most anxiously. Some, Bible in hand, were searching the Scriptures, and reading out the circumstances relating to the incidents connected with it; whilst the captain, who was also amongst us, was explaning the country on either side, with his chart spread out before him on the skylight. The land on the left hand side, or Egypt, showing an extensive plain, where once was *Piha-*

hiroth over against Baalzephon, at which place were encamped the millions of the Israelites; a rocky range of hills resting on their left flank. It is supposed, that they had intended marching over this range of hills through a narrow defile, round by Suez, on their journey to the promised land; which had they attempted even without an enemy in their rear, and no consequent danger, would have taken them a very long time in executing. This project must have been entirely abandoned, upon information being brought them, that Pharoah and his host were approaching; for, had they commenced their progress through the narrow defile, they must inevitably have been attacked, and overwhelmed by the enemy. The rocks coming almost perpendicularly down to the water's edge, which is very deep

just at that part, rendered escape impossible, and placed them in a state of perplexity and confusion, from which they were extricated through the intervention of Divine Providence, by the working of that miracle which alone saved them from ruin.

On the right hand side, or that portion of the land bordering on Syria, is also an extensive plain, and it was upon this, at Baalzephon probably, that the Israelitish host, halted to view the workings of the vengeance of the Almighty upon their pursuers; by which the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hands of the Egyptians, when they entered the dreadful passage, which they themselves had but just crossed in safety, to behold the whole of Pharoah's chosen army, his chariots, his horses and men, all

overwhelmed in the terrible waves of destruction.

It was at this particular spot that the Israelites crossed; not higher up; had it been higher up, that is, on the other side of the rocks and hills alluded to, there would have been no occasion for the miracle; for then they would have had the hills *between* them and the enemy; which from the route they took, and the course of pursuit adopted by Pharaoh, was *not* the case. Besides, the Israelites were encamped at Pihahiroth, (by divine command) which was on *this* side of the said hills. I repeat, not higher up; because I have heard it said, that the Israelites crossed, or rather waded, across the Red Sea, *at low water*. The idea is ridiculous; for why should an immense multitude of living souls, encumbered as they

must have been with baggage, the aged and the helpless, to say nothing of the thousands and thousands of beasts of burthen and cattle, march through water with an enemy threatening their rear; thereby running the risk of being drowned by the tide coming upon them (which must have been the case had they commenced crossing); why should they hazard such an undertaking, when they could pursue their journey on dry land *via* Suez? And, again; where is there a spot in the Red Sea, from the Straits of Babelmandeb up to the very landing-place at Suez, where people can cross on foot from one side to the other? There are sand-banks here and there, certainly; upon which the boatmen run while tracking their boats; but there is great depth of water between them, and at high tide, these even are

not fordable. The Bible speaks for itself, however, and is as plain as language can describe it. The localities pointed out by the natives tally with what is said in Holy Writ, and they are supposed to be better acquainted with places and circumstances, which have been handed down to them from generation to generation, than people who have never even visited the country.

It is said of Napoleon, that he attempted to find out the passage of the Israelites: the consequence was, that in searching for the ford, the tide came upon him, and he almost shared the same fate as did Pharoah.

Moses' Wells were pointed out to us; situated on the plain to our right as we went up. It is from these that the natives obtain their water—that procured

from other places is so brackish, that it is even dangerous to drink thereof. In the neighbourhood of these Wells lies Marah, remarkable for the bitterness of its waters, which the Israelites were unable to drink; indeed, the water over the whole of the country is very bad.

We gazed long and earnestly at these remarkable places; various were the surmises made, and many the opinions given. How remarkable was the whole country round about us! What wonderful scenes had it witnessed; and how many ages had elapsed since such had been enacted! I considered the subject much too serious to bear discussion; being confident, in my own mind, that what was down in *the book*, must be correct; and I determined not to hazard

any opinions on the *pro's* and *con's* dilated upon by my fellow-travellers.

We had delightful weather up to this period, enjoying ourselves much, and devouring with avidity all the sights which presented themselves to us. All was *fair and above board* in fine weather; but, at the time I allude to, it came on to blow smartly, and the sea ran high, which caused the *disagreeable* ship (so the ladies called her now) to pitch and roll about most playfully; the consequence was, that several of us were sea-sick, I amongst the number; and I wished heartily that we had come to the end of our voyage. However, it did not last long; we soon ran out of the stormy winds; a very convenient thing in a steamer; not so with those sailing ships which are tossed and tumbled about till the storm chooses to

leave them ; for, poor things, they cannot get out of the way fast enough. There is nothing like steam, notwithstanding all that others may say to the contrary, be it by sea or by land; this was the first time we had any roughness with the Hindustan ; she was remarkably steady, and proved herself what she has always been known to be—an excellent sea-boat.

CHAPTER VII.

Arrival at Suez—The Shallowness of the Water—Debarkation of Passengers—Shore-Boats and Crews—Long Pull—Harbour—Appearance of Suez—Landing-place.

In due course of time we arrived in safety at Suez, the only drawback to our happiness being the necessity of parting with the good Hindustan and those connected with her; from and worthy captain, down to the Hubshee stoker-boy. Sorry, indeed, were we when we had to leave all these friends. I hope,

however, the time is not far distant, when I shall have the pleasure of again meeting them.

Owing to the shallowness of the water, and the enormous size of our ship, we were obliged to bring to, at a greater distance from the town than other vessels, a very inconvenient thing, considering the long pull to the shore. We could not land the same evening we arrived; we had therefore ample time to make our preparations, and have a good sleep beforehand. I must here mention, that we had nothing whatever to do with our baggage. The Company's agent (of whom more anon) boarded us as soon as we came to anchor, and recommended us to make up small bundles for our journey across the desert, as we should not have another opportunity of opening our boxes until we reached

Cairo. I therefore prepared a hand-basket full of requisites for ourselves, and gave no further thought about my other things. All that you have to do with your luggage is, to see that the different boxes, &c. &c. are all marked with your name or initials, and regularly numbered.

The next morning as many of the passengers as could, left the ship in the boats belonging to her; each party, as they pushed off, standing up, and giving their old friends a farewell cheer; which was responded to by those on board in true British style. Those for whom there was no accommodation in the ship's boats, were put into those from the shore, large, roomy craft, peculiar to the country, but dreadfully dirty, and with crews as filthy as their boats. The one we landed in, was a shore-boat. We had the ship's doctor

with us, who proved of great service to us. There is nothing to pay for these boats; they are provided by the Company. People sometimes give the boatmen presents, but this we were advised not to do, as it was objectionable, for more reasons than one; the principle being that they were well paid by their employers, and there was no necessity for anything more; it only made the fellows insolent. The boats are pulled by paddles, and sometimes poled, when in shallow water; and at others, dragged by ropes along the banks of the inlet, on the many little islands visible at low water. Ours was a tedious business, for, the tide being out, we grounded frequently, and the Arabs were obliged to jump out, and push the boat off the sand. When they pull, they sing a song, or chaunt, in Arabic; some-

thing resembling the Lascars on board ship—one man singing, and the rest joining chorus. These Arabs are a most indelicate, dirty set; they think nothing of exposing their nakedness before others, standing up in the boat and demeaning themselves in the most indecent manner possible. I think we must have been upwards of two hours getting to the shore; I never was so tired of sitting in a boat, as I was on this occasion. Glad indeed, was I when we came to the landing-place. The harbour at Suez has in it nothing worthy of notice; little or nothing seemed to be going on there, in the way of trade, or merchandize; indeed, I only saw three or four dismasted *Grabs* lying at anchor. Whatsoever of business is transacted at Suez must be from the interior. I believe, however, that when we were there,

it was not the season of the year for the arrival at, or departure of vessels from that place.

There was something beautifully clear in the water all the way up to Suez. When rowing to the shore, we could see to the bottom, and mark the sand and shells, and pebbles, plainly visible. I felt almost tempted to take a plunge, and would have done so had it not been for the cold. It must be delightful in warm weather to have a bathe, without the fear of drowning, if one cannot swim; or of being carried off by sharks, or some such-like sea-monsters. We had a lovely day for landing, the sun shining brightly; not a cloud in the sky; everything looked pleasing; and, notwith standing its being cold and bleak, still, I suppose, the thoughts of having arrived thus far in safety, made us imagine that

what we would otherwise have looked upon as dreary and disagreeable, presented charms such as we had no idea of seeing in such an out-of-the-way place.

The appearance, from the outside of Suez, was anything but inviting; nothing but a heap of old dirty looking houses, huddled together with a minaret or two, and something resembling a fortification, met the eye, as we drew near our landing-place. The annexed will give the reader an idea of the place, being a hurried sketch made as I sat in the boat. On the left, nothing was to be seen but the range of rocks running close to the water's edge; and under one of these, in the distance, we caught a glimpse of our good ship lying at her anchorage. On the right, is an extensive plain, with sand-hills in the back ground; and all that could be seen

on it, were some strings of dromedaries, led by their keepers, pursuing their weary march along the cheerless waste, to procure water from Moses' Wells.

We now came alongside of the place of debarkation; a sort of perpendicular revetment wall, close to which were moored several small craft, swarming with Arabs, flies, and filth; these of themselves offering formidable obstacles to our approach, as in getting on shore we had to go through the ordeal of crossing these floating disagreeables, before we could consider ourselves in safety on *terra firma*; indeed, it was no easy task, particularly for the females of our party, as I will presently describe in the next Chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

Suez—The Landing—Town—Numerous Beggars—Inhabitants—Buildings—The Transit Company's Agent—A Hotel—A Scene.

Behold us now fairly at Suez! Our starting point for the terrible journey across the desert; that dreadful wilderness, replete with all sorts of horrors: of which we had heard such glaring accounts, such wonderful reports; carrying with them sufficient food for the imaginations of the timid and fearful; of sandy wastes, scorching heat, and tempestuous over-

whelming sirocco; of one solitary spring (the oasis) with a date-tree growing by it, and of being smothered in the sand. Yes; here we were at last, safely arrived, and landed at Suez. But how did we land remains still to be described. I really cannot pass by, without making mention of this all-important circumstance.

I said before, that our boat ranged along side of another, which was moored close to a revetment wall. No steps or ladders invitingly presented themselves to our anxious view! All plain wall (without even such a thing as a projecting stone,) and that about five or six feet high from the deck of the boat! How, in the name of fortune, were the ladies to surmount this difficulty? The men even found it a matter of exertion! And now, is it not a glaring shame that the agents, or

transit company, do not, in this instance, make some arrangements for the landing of their passengers? I leave the healthy and active out of the question; they could rough it out; but how is the sick, or bed-ridden, or the delicate and timid female, to clamber up this bare wall? In the boat in which I landed, there were two ladies; both of them ill, one recently very ill; and at the time confined to her bed. I leave the gentle reader to picture to himself the inconvenience and danger these ladies were exposed to, in having to mount this said wall. Why not have some flight of steps or ladder placed there for the accommodation of all parties? These agents and others are very active and zealous in all things; but, in the matter I complain of, they have evinced great want of forethought and management.

When the males of our party had got on shore, we were obliged to hold a consultation how our ladies were to land. At last, by dint of jumping, and pulling, and lifting, and slipping, exposed to the crowd of dirty ruffians who congregated at the place, we contrived to get them safe on their legs; but not without the poor sick person having undergone great pain and fatigue. This execrable landing-place was ten per cent. worse than that at Point de Galle!

What we saw of the town was any thing but pleasing: dirty streets, dilapidated houses, and a stench enough to give one the cholera, if not the plague. The public buildings are not a jot better than the rest. There was a hotel being erected when we arrived: when finished, it will be like placing a pearl on a dunghill.

I cannot remember ever having seen such a number of beggars, as were assembled at our landing-place. It appeared that all the most miserable of Egypt, had come together to welcome us to their shores. Disease, filth, and tattered garments were the predominating features of this wretched multitude; verily had we an early view of Egyptian poverty! The eager way and pitiful tone of voice in which these miserable mendicants supplicated charity, was indeed touching. I saw, however, many a ruffian amongst them, who, had they the opportunity, would no doubt have made their requests, more at the dagger's point, than in the would-be-humble way which they had adopted.

The generality of the inhabitants, at least, such as we saw, appeared to me to be squalid and poverty-stricken. Some there

were, but very few indeed, apparently in better circumstances; and they stalked about, or sat smoking their pipes with the air of conscious superiority, seemingly taking no notice of their inferior fellow-creatures. The better dressed personages I took to be merchants, and so they were, as well from Turkey as from other parts. But the poor natives of Suez were indeed objects of pity. It is evident, the Padsha does not place much importance upon this town; as if he did, he would look more to the condition of its inhabitants, to say nothing of the town itself. However, I presume, that the overland communication, and coming changes in the transit arrangements, will soon render Suez a place of greater consequence than it has hitherto been; at present, it is a most miserable specimen of Mahomet Alli's Government.

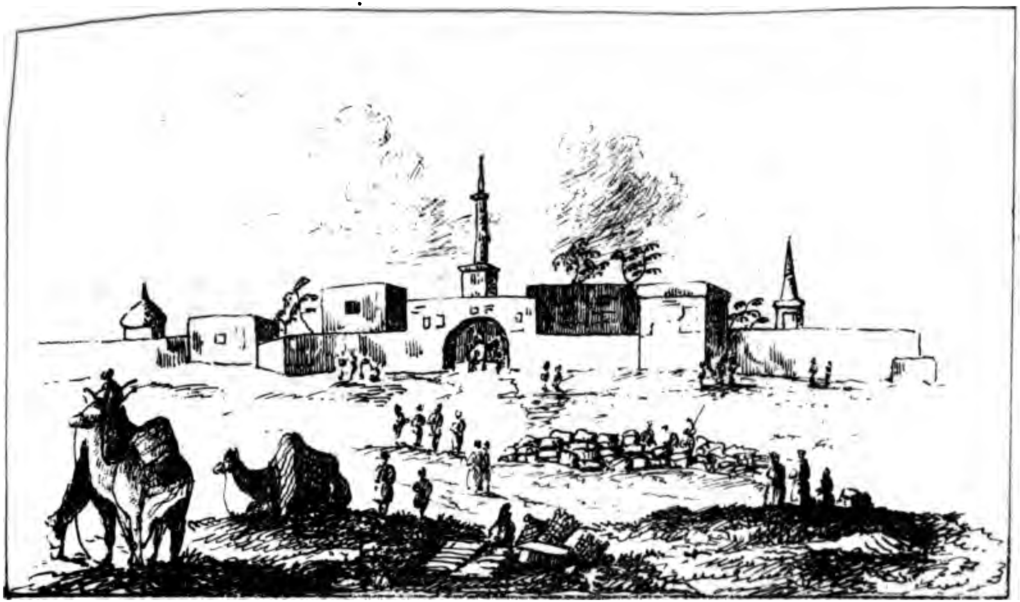
It is a well known fact, that Suez was once the *entrepot* of an extensive commerce; remains of large magazines, and traces of numerous buildings, are visible in various directions. The harbour was formerly deep enough to admit of large vessels coming up ; but it is at present so choked up, that none but little barques and grabs can do so. Had Napoleon's projects been carried through, Suez would have been a far superior place to what it is now.

We proceeded at once, bundle in hand, to the interior of the town, and were conducted to the Transit Company Agent's Office, where we had tickets issued to us for seats in the vans for crossing the desert. The agent was a very civil sort of a personage, evidently one held in great importance, from the numerous Arabs who crowded the door.

From this office we wended our way to the Hotel, a filthy apology for such a name; the very stairs, up to the principle room, were so ricketty, that it was dangerous to mount them. The building itself is in the oriental style; rooms badly arranged; and approaches to them without any covering; open to all weathers; kitchen on the same floor as the bedrooms; and other places similarly situated. The room into which I first went, and where we took our dinner, is an oblong, with divans at the further end. The captain, doctor, and purser of our ship, dined with us. The former told me, that the room was the very one occupied by the great Napoleon during his stay at Suez. What a change had taken place since his visit! Then, it was the apartment of one of the greatest men in the

world! Now, it was the eating-room of passengers from India. Little did he think, that Egypt would be the high road to England from the very country his ambition thirsted for! And still less did he imagine that the very place, from whence he had hoped to open a communication between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean, would be the first stage of travellers from the East, and that by the very same route he had traversed with his army!

The Consul's house was close by this hotel; but we saw nothing of him, though we caught a glimpse of fair faces and bright eyes, at the windows, looking into the principle square of the town. Here a busy scene presented itself; camels and dromedaries, mules and donkeys; groups of Arabs and Europeans here and there;



A SCENE AT SUEZ

and all our luggage piled up in an enormous heap in the centre. We had a good look at all these proceedings, and were mightily pleased at observing the expedition and care with which our boxes, &c. were placed upon the backs of the camels; these animals patiently kneeling, chewing their cud, and now and then giving a sort of grunt as an extra box was placed on them, as much as to say, "I have enough." The sketch we have presented will give some idea of the scene.

CHAPTER IX.

Vans for Crossing the Desert—The Agent to the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Company—His Attention—Allotment of Passengers.

THE vans, or carriages, for conveying our precious bodies across the desert, are very well adapted to the purpose for which they are intended. They are something between an omnibus and a travelling-cart; such as are used now-a-day in country towns in England, to carry passengers from one village to another; something also resembling a baker's cart. It holds

six persons, who sit *vis a vis*, on rather stiff break-back seats, with little or no room for hats or bonnets above-head. It has only two wheels, and those very high, requiring a ladder to enable one to get in. These things are placed upon *no very easy* springs; the consequences are, that every little irregularity of the road, gives those inside very unpleasant knocks and bumps; such as they are not prepared to receive. However, these are matters of secondary consideration, so we shall proceed. There are apologies for windows and curtains attached; the former are composed of canvass, which when the van is in motion, flutter in the breeze, and make a disagreeable noise. The latter are of no use whatever, and better out of the way. The coachman is perched up aloft, looking for all the world like a huge red-faced

baboon, with a red cap on! His box is a single one, and consequently holds only his worthy self; and there he sits enjoying his "*otium cum dignitate,*" cracking his whip, and hollowing to his cattle, smokes his pipe and cares for nobody. There are four horses to each of these vans, fine animals most of them, but in woefully bad condition, apparently poorly fed, and hard worked. They go at a good pace, considering all things, and some of them are put to the vans before being broken in: the consequences may be imagined; and, I will add, that many accidents and detentions took place on the road on that account. The harness is exactly what is used for *cart horses*, strong and serviceable.

The agent to the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company,

Mr. D——, here made himself very useful. I must remark, that the company above mentioned, contract with the Egyptian Transit Company, for the conveyance of passengers, &c. &c., from Suez to Alexandria; the former paying the latter so much for each individual passenger and his luggage; and the latter, providing the means of conveyance, through the desert, and passage down the Nile, as well as food all the way to the Capital. But several alterations have taken place since the period I allude to. The Padsha has, I believe, taken the Transit monopoly into his own hands; and how things are managed at the present moment, I do not exactly know. However, I do not think there is much difference, except that the Padsha's people are not so civil, and passengers do not fare so well as we did; they have

only to pay for wines and spirits, and hotel expenses, at Suez, Cairo, and Alexandria, however long they may be detained at each of these places. We had, therefore, every thing clear before us; no trouble whatsoever, except that of moving, eating and drinking; and that was pleasant enough too; notwithstanding the bumping and sitting up. The van in which my wife and I travelled, had only five, of whom Mr. D — was one. I never met with a more amiable, gentlemanly person. He did every thing in his power to be useful to the travellers, and was indeed an agreeable "*compagnon de voyage!*" giving us every information, and answering our numerous questions with most accurate readiness. He had a difficult task to perform in allotting the number of passengers to the vans (of which I think there were twelve

or thirteen) several of them wishing to go together, and all not being able to go as they pleased. However, he managed very well indeed. The whole were divided into three parties, starting as we landed. Those who were on shore first, went first; then came the next four vans; and then the last batch. The agent's arrangements were excellent; and after we had had our dinner, we shouldered our bundles, walked down to the vans, took our respective seats, bid good bye to the captain and the rest for the last time, and started in a manner which shall be seen in the next chapter.

CHAPTER X.

A Start—Rate of Going—Out-Skirts of Suez—Military Posts — The Desert — Telegraphs — Change Horses—Their Treatment—The Desert Road—Our Baggage—A Bivouac.

At last we were off. Four huge vans full of passengers rattled out of the square, with a whoop and a shout, a waving of hats and kerchiefs, and many a hearty farewell, and safe journey from the bystanders. Away we went! The coachman cracked his terrible whip; (I never heard such a crack in my life before—not

even an English drayman could make such a crack, I am certain!) crack went the whip,—some of the unruly horses kicked and plunged, and were severely flogged, timid ladies held on like grim death, men laughed loud, as they knocked against each other; and all raised a *hurrah* of joy which made the houses of Suez ring again with the merry echo.

We bid farewell to Suez with gladness, since our doing so, took us away from one of the dirtiest towns I ever visited, not having met with one to equal it during my travels in India. Glad also were we to leave it, because it was the means of bringing us nearer home.

We dashed through the town in gallant style; the horses galloping and prancing, and our vans pitching and rolling like so many ships in a storm. The pace we

went at was indeed excellent; the same the whole way, without abatement; however, the drivers do not punish their cattle unnecessarily, nor do they allow them to overwork themselves; they invariably go up a rising ground, or over a patch of heavy sand, at a gallop; so, as to get through the obstacle the sooner, at every two miles they are stopped to take breath, which makes them go the faster afterwards; and if one van is in advance to any great distance of the rest, the driver always stops until the rear ones come up, and then starts again. We had fine fun on the road, the drivers of the different conveyances vying with each other, to keep front, evidently in the hopes of a *bukhseesh* (present) at the end of the journey. Our coachmen was a surly old rascal, and drove at his own pace, notwithstanding

all my exertions to induce him to *heave a-head.* We enjoyed our drive excessively. Anything for a change, after the confinement of a sea voyage.

The outskirts of Suez are in keeping with the interior of the town. Heaps of accumulated rubbish on all sides: filth of every description, and ruinous houses, lined the road for some distance. Dead dogs and donkeys, skeletons of camels presented themselves here and there; causing a stench sufficient to make one sick. Squalid huts inhabited by still more squalid wretches, with starvation and disease depicted on their miserable faces; in fact, every thing and object which we saw, gave us an idea of abject poverty —the acme of human woe. I was glad when we passed these pitiful scenes, and breathed more freely when we came upon the open plain.

As we drove along, we saw several square forts or redoubts, at the gateways of which stood one or two specimens of soldiery, such as I had never before seen. These redoubts are more or less in a ruinous state, evidently allowed to be so, and the soldiery posted in them, perhaps for want of better accommodation, with a view of preventing disturbance in the town, or of capturing Bedouin robbers, of whom there are several gangs hovering about in the desert, ready to pounce upon any defenceless traveller who may pass that way. I give a sketch of one of these redoubts,* such as I can remember of it, not having been able to to make one, owing to the motion and

* Some of these are large and strong, with good accommodations for troops, and ditch, covered-way, and glacis.

bumping of the van. They were erected by Napoleon when he was in Egypt, for the purpose of protecting the trade between Cairo and Suez: and must have been very useful during those disturbed times. Outside of them are generally a few huts, in which reside the families of the soldiers; whilst they themselves occupy the interior of their castles. Their donkeys, mules, and ponies, are picketted under the walls; half starved animals, with no food, excepting that which their own ruminations purvey for them; I fear their commissariat supplies are upon no very expensive or elaborate scale; and I doubt if their masters are much better off than themselves.

At certain distances, and on rising ground, are erected telegraphs, used for the purpose of communicating with the

different stations and Cairo: the intelligence of the arrival of steamers and mails at Suez. I forget the distance at which they are situated from each other, about two or three miles I should imagine. The intelligence is conveyed very rapidly, and I believe answers the purpose very well, thereby enabling the people on the road, to prepare the relays of horses and refreshments for passengers. Each telegraph is managed by an Arab, who resides in the building: a solitary watch tower, the place seemed too: a kind of *mortello* with a small postern and loopholes. What a beautiful residence for a recluse! What silence! What solitude! Nothing heard save the howling of the wind across the dreary waste. No companion save his own thoughts, and perhaps no thoughts excepting those of sadness. I believe

these poor fellows are relieved weekly. I'd rather starve than be one of them.

After driving a distance of about ten miles, we arrived in safety at the end of our first stage, where a relay of horses awaited us. Our weary and steaming steeds were expeditiously released from the drag, and taken into the stables, and *fresh* ones put to. We were agreeably surprised at the smart way in which this change of horses was effected; as well and as quickly done, as the most expert ostlers of Old England. All four vans came to this place together, and started afresh as before. But the question is, where are all these horses kept? And another, are there fresh ones for all the twelve or fourteen vans? The horses are kept in excellent stables, and taken every care of; wiped down, groomed and

fed (the latter not over plentifully I imagine) as quickly as possible; but with regard to their number, I must mention that it is only the *first* batch of vans which have the *fresh* horses; those coming after, are obliged to take the ones which have been left by their predecessors; the consequences were, that we, who came rearmost of all, had the jaded brutes who had borne the burden and heat of the day. I think, however, that the van, in which my party was, had fresh horses, the best and the steadiest all the way, from the circumstance of the agent being with us; I say this merely as a surmise on my part, because I observed our animals always went so well, and appeared in better condition; above all, we had no *kegging*. Whilst the horses were being changed, we got out to stretch our legs

a little; there is not room for that inside the vans. The building we came to is merely a large stable, flat-roofed; and from what I could see of it, made entirely of upright timber and boards. I did not observe any accommodations for travellers here; those were on in advance. No other habitations presented themselves; all around was barren waste, telling us most forcibly that this *was* the desert. I looked out for sandy clouds, and could see nothing of the sort. There was not a particle of dust. The tract over which we drove was moist and firm, and we had nothing to alarm us whatsoever; all was plain sailing, and as easy and comfortable as we could wish to be. I have heard complaints made of this mode of conveyance, and I allow that it might be better; but what would these grumblers say, if

they had to cross the desert on dromedaries and donkeys, get burnt to death, and be two or three days in reaching Cairo instead of twenty-four hours? When the railroad is established, I shall be happy to acknowledge that it is better than the vans; but until then we ought to think ourselves lucky, to have such comfortable conveyances, when those who travelled the same route before us, had nothing of the sort!

On we went again, leaving the solitary stables far behind us; away, away, over sand and stones; up hill and down dale; sometimes on even wheels, at others on one! Glorious knocks we got! But who cared? We passed a long string of camels and dromedaries, led by Arabs, armed to the teeth. Upon looking more closely, they proved to be carrying our

baggage. We happened to halt for a while, and then we had ample time to look at the cavalcade. Each searched for his portmanteau or trunk. One exclaimed, "Oh! I see mine!" Another, "I am sure mine are lost, for I cannot see them." One lady cried out, "Do tell me, can you see my bonnet-box?" and another, "I wonder whether my carpet bag with the brass padlock is there!" My wife asked me, if all *our things* were correct? I satisfied her on that point, for I counted our boxes to her; beginning at one, and ending at seven; but, I confess, whether I saw them or not, I cannot tell. However, I made no doubt but that all were right. Our fellow-traveller calmed our fears by assuring us that he had been on this road for upwards of four years, and had not known a single article lost!

I beg leave to digress for a moment by observing, that before starting from Madras, my friends there had advised me to take a couple of dozen of water in a hamper with me, for consumption in crossing the desert. This I did, and had the precious basket taken every care of on board the steamer, comforting myself with the pleasurable thoughts, at all events, of having some good water to drink in the absence of anything more substantial. I took two bottles out at Suez, and stowed them away in the van, in case of the water being required. One bottle was finished by a little lady in black, and the other I gave to some one who had been smoking a great deal, and who felt very *dry!* The remainder was never touched; and I would recommend no one to burthen themselves with anything of the sort, as

here is plenty on the road, besides excellent beer and other good things far preferable. So much for my two dozen of water. I espied the hamper dangling at the side of a camel, which I was sorry for, as I had given orders for its being left behind. For my part, I make it a rule to drink as little as possible while travelling, and to eat less; this regimen, I fancy, few would adopt; and I dare say, my readers will feel inclined to smile when I here say, that I always found myself much better for observing abstinence on the journey, and laying in a good store of eatables when I came to the end of it.

Progressing onwards, we came upon a *bivouac*—a group of travellers halting in the desert for the night, after their weary day's journey. There they were all seated on the ground, their pavilion, the

beautiful blue sky above their heads, and their couches the sandy plain. These fellows appeared to be merchants from Cairo, going to Suez. They had their armed guard with them—mercenaries, who, I dare say, would desert them, were an enemy, in the shape of a band of robbers, to present themselves. All their bales of merchandise, and the *kajawas*, or pack-saddles, of their camels, &c., were piled inside, and their beasts picketted in a sort of square facing outwards, making, as it were, a fortification. Their fires were lighted, some were busy cooking, whilst the superiors were lolling their lazy lengths on their small carpets, smoking their *kaliouns* and pipes as comfortably as possible, whilst others were kneeling and bowing, engaged in the performance of their evening orisons. It was an in-

teresting sight, and I hope I may be pardoned mentioning it in this place. Similar descriptions of such scenes are so frequently given, that a repetition is considered tiring, and stale, to say the least of it. I have therefore hazarded this desert bivouac, accompanied by an apology for having done so: and I hope that both will be accepted.

CHAPTER XI.

Station, No. 6—A Dinner in the Desert—Arab Cook — Water — Accommodations — Adventures —Arab Coachmen—State of the Roads—Advantages of the Route.

We left Suez at about two o'clock in the afternoon, and arrived at Station, No. 6, a distance of about twenty miles, at a quarter past four o'clock. Here we were to dine, or rather to take tea; but not a drop of tea had any of us; we partook of something far more to the purpose: to wit, a good Irish stew! On arriving, we

all got out and made our way into the mess-room. Whilst the ladies of the party, retired into very nice apartments to make themselves decent, the gentlemen bustled about, and made the folks at the place as sharp as our own appetites. In the course of about ten minutes, three or four large dishes of smoking Irish stew made their appearance; which we attacked, as if we had been starved, though every excuse was to be made for our voracity, considering the distance we had come, the cold wind, &c. &c. I think I am not far wrong when I declare, that the Irish stew dishes were replenished more than three times; after which, we fell to at some excellent cheese, biscuits, and prime Bass' ale, all which was first rate. The reader may imagine, by the above, that ample justice was done to the viands: there

was also a dessert, consisting of apples, dates, raisins, and so forth. The whole turn out was better than we had anticipated, and the quantity eat was more than the worthy keeper of the place had any idea of. I watched him as he stood behind us, and the expression of astonishment and horror depicted on his countenance was truly laughable. The bottled porter and beer was exquisite, and so was the port and brandy. We could have had champaign, if we had called for it! I never remember having seen people make a heartier meal. A vote of thanks was proposed and carried *nem con,* to the cook, for the really excellent Irish stew he had served up. Some of us sallied into the good man's *sanctum sanctorum,* to have a look at this prince of Arab cooks, the first of the sort we had ever come across—a

jolly faced fat-chopped fellow he appeared to be too—evidently, one who did not stick to the rules of Moslemism; but who preferred the more substantial feeding of far more sensible people than those of his creed. I asked him if he was a true Mussulman? and I repeated the usual phrase of "La hillah, hillallah, Mahomed oo russool oolah," (which in English is—"There is no God but God, and Mahomed is his Prophet.") Upon which, he asked me if I were a Moslem? I answered him that I was not; but a "*Ferung*," (Englishman), at which he stared, as much as to say, "How then do you come to repeat what you just did?" He showed us his kitchen, which though not on a very elaborate scale, had still the *multum in parvo* in its arrangements; at all events, the Irish stew spoke volumes in its favour.

So much for the Arab cook. I only hope that, if the plague has not taken him, he has treated travellers as well since as he did us when we honored him with our company.

People told us that we should not have any water in the Desert; quite a mistake; at all events we found an iron tank full of it here; though I do not think we expended any very large quantity of it. Those who did drink the water pronounced it excellent. Every station has a supply, which is brought from Cairo, from the Nile, and is carried by camels bearing large leather bags full of it, in the same manner as we carry water on bullocks with our troops in India. It costs the Transit Company a good deal employing so many camels for this purpose; but it is the only way to have good water. That

procured at Suez and in the desert, is so bad, that those who drink it are invariably attacked with *dissentery*, which carries a man off nearly as expeditiously as cholera!

The accommodations at this place of good cheer are tolerable; though nothing very extensive. There are I think four bed rooms, and a hall for meals. The former are furnished with iron bedsteads, wash hand stands, sofa, and chairs, and the linen appeared clean; in the latter is a long table with chairs, and a divan at one end, all very proper and comfortable. The kitchen is close by, and the stabling for the horses in the rear of the building. The whole is somewhat in the style of a large flat roofed bangalow without any enclosure.

After our meal was ended, bills paid, and horses put to, we jumped into our

vans and made a fresh start of it. I say, "bills paid," as those who called for wine, beer, or spirits, had to pay for it. I think our party demolished a good quantum of beer, about two dozen and a half, and that was doing pretty well. There is nothing to be paid for eating, tea, or coffee, and as much water as you like to imbibe; but any liquor is extra, and comes under the denomination of "*hotel expenses.*" I will say that the charges are very moderate. There is no occasion to fee the waiter or cook, though I believe something is generally given; it is a great comfort that nothing is asked for.

We did not pursue our journey without *some* occurrences to amuse us; for instance on the occasion of our start from No. 6, some of the horses which were put to the vans, and which had already come with

the party in advance of us from No. 7, were very loath to go another ten miles; and when they were required to go further, theywould not move—some of them kicked; some sat down on their haunches; some laid down, and would not rise up notwithstanding all the whippings and kickings of the coachmen, and the many knocks given them by the enraged passengers. There was a dead halt at No. 6, for some time, decidedly; the only van which got on was ours, and when we had gone about three hundred yards, our coachy pulled up also, to wait for the others. He would not budge an inch, although I poked him with a stick to induce him to move on, move he would not; however the rear vans at last got under-weigh, and came up to where we were, when all started fairly together; the drivers of the

"*kegging*" horses paying their beasts off for their obstinacy. Ours was a most surly old rascal as I before observed—he would not do anything we asked him, and when I gave him a poke on the ribs with my stick, he came out with a volley of anathemas in Arabic, which astonished me. He jumped off his box and sat down at a distance from us. I called "*bukseesh mafeesh,*"* to which he snapped his fingers most indignantly, as much as to say, "*I care not,*" and the reader may imagine he got no "*bukseesh*" from us; all he received when he reached Cairo, was a good scolding from the agent for his obstinacy.

We were agreeably surprised at the state of the tracks or roads over which

* "There is no present for you."

we went. From what we had heard, we expected to have sand up to our eyes, but no such thing, the ground was moist and hard, and in some places as smooth as a well made carriage drive! We had here and there a little sand truly, but 'twas nothing of consequence. I have driven over many a worse road in large military stations in India. It is indeed a pity that a parcel of croaking, discontented grumblers should be allowed to frighten their fellow creatures by exaggerating things far beyond their real state. We had heard of the inconveniences of the overland route, the dreadful fatigues of crossing the desert, the bad conveyances, bad fare and worse roads, but we found everything quite the contrary. We were determined to be pleased, so found matters much better than we had anti-

cipated, and who cares, as long as we get home in so short a space of time, as this self-same much abused route allows us to do.

There is plenty of room for improvement, the rapid march of *time* and *intellect*, together with that spirit of enterprise so glaringly evinced by the good old Padsha, will accomplish all that is wished for, until the journey from India to England will have reached the zenith of perfection, and grumblers will then, it is to be hoped, cease from indulging in their propensities.

CHAPTER XII.

Arrival at No. 5, and Change Horses—Evening in the Desert—Skeletons of Camels, &c.—A Meeting at No. 4—A Halt—The Comforts of a Rest—Early Rising and consequences.

It was now beginning to get dark, the shades of night were casting their mantle over the land. The next place we came to was No. 5, where we again changed horses. We did not reach this place until between eight and nine o'clock in the evening. We passed a cavalcade of European travellers, riding on camels and donkeys. Mr. D. informed us that they were going

on an excursion of pleasure, having arrived from England but a few days before. There were two or three ladies amongst them, who seemed to be enjoying the fun vastly, laughing right merrily, and waving their kerchiefs to us as we passed them. I fancy they must have had rather a cold ride of it to their halting ground.

Now that it was dark, we encountered a little more rough work than we had previously experienced; such as, some tremendous jolting, and knocking of heads. Some of us tried sleep but in vain: however *one* lady did contrive somehow or other, to have a nap, when she awoke she found her head comfortably reposing on Mr. D's shoulder! We had certainly darkness on our side, not even a lantern or lamp, the coachmen driving their horses by means of a man in white, running on a head

of each team, who acted as a sort of guide to show the road. Then there was such shouting and jabberring in Arabic, worse even than "Malabars"! Such bumping and rolling from one side to the other! I really expected every moment to see an upset; but no such accident befell us. We broke a trace, but that was soon rectified and altogether we got on very well.

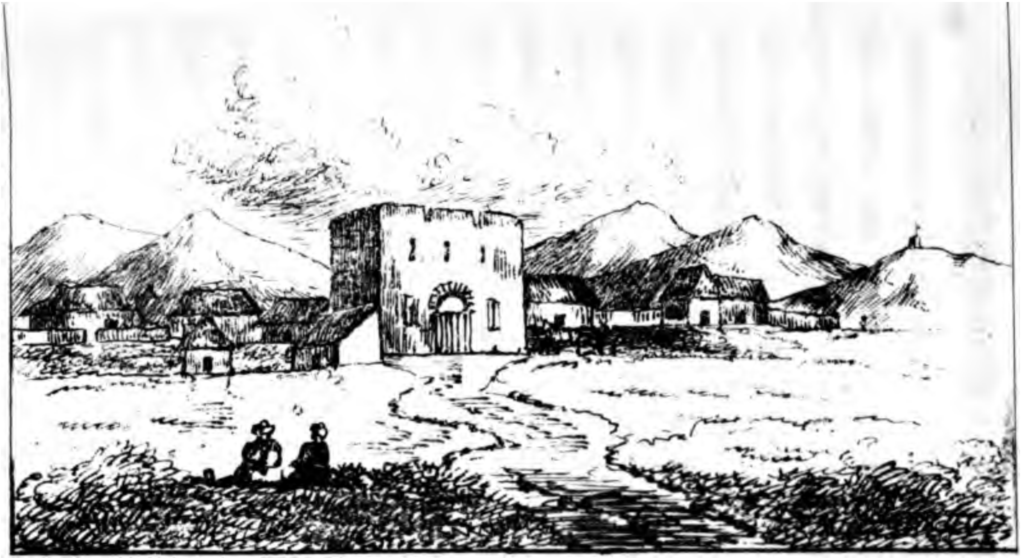
In due course of time the moon made her appearance, and then all was easy work. The poor worn-out guide jumped up behind, and we proceeded very comfortably. It was a bright moonlight, and we could see the whole plain over which we were moving, extending as far as the eye could reach, not a very magnificent sight, though from the circumstance, not worth seeing.

We passed a great many skeletons of camels, horses and other animals, lying on

either side of us. I was told, it very frequently happens that these poor things fall down dead from want of water, and the excessive heat during the hot months. We were fortunate, then, in coming at the season of the year we did. As for vegetation for grazing there was little or none; some grass is however found in the small hollows which catch the rain-water, but that is soon eat up, or parched in the sun. It is therefore necessary for the desert travellers to carry forage as well as water for their beasts; and this, is generally done, where it can be afforded, by having extra camels laden with leather bags, full of the one, and bundles of the other; but the poor solitary Bedouin, with his one dromedary, must carry all, or starve! It is a well known fact, the length of time that these animals go without water, but

they even must have a drink when they really become thirsty; and then if there is no water for them, poor creatures, their strength fails them, and they are left to perish in the wilderness. The Bedouin, however, generally has a small leather bag with water, and this supply suffices for man and beast; but in some instances and when the heat is excessive, that even is not enough, and dire necessity compels the former to expend himself, what he would otherwise give the latter, which has to go without: nature assists the poor dumb animal, and then when it can no longer do so, it falls to the ground to rise, no more; the master derserts it, and it dies, the solitary remains showing to the passer by, what once it was, a faithful hard working thing, and now, alas, a mass of corruption!

We arrived at No. 4 at about twelve o'clock at night; the progress we made from the last station, was very slow certainly, but we had safety on our side, and that is better than going fast with the chance of a broken neck. Here we caught up those who had started before us. They were all bustling out of bed, to make room for the fresh arrivals. But I must mention to the reader, that No. 4 is the principle halting ground in the desert. Here is a regular hotel. A large house with a range of apartments for families as well as single persons. There is a hall for meals, and a suite of six or eight bed-rooms. A flight of stone steps leads you up; underneath are the stables and other offices, kitchen, &c. &c. It was dreadfully cold when we arrived. Mr. D. told me to seize a bed-room at



THE [illegible] FORT

once; which I forthwith did; securing one, which had but just been vacated by a married couple; so I bundled my wife into bed without delay, and ran down into kitchen to procure her a hot cup of coffee. There was such a noise and hubbub at this place, such hollooing and shouting; horses neighing, kicking, and fighting; Arab coachmen and ostlers wrangling; passengers on the start running up and down the steps, and shaking hands, and talking with those come; ladies calling frantically for their children; and children crying for the cold; maid-servants and nurses flying about with their dresses not fastened behind, somewith caps and bonnets, others with stockings and garters in their hands; people rushing up against each other and begging pardon; one man running here and another there as if mad; in fact I

never saw such a sight—'twas confusion worse confounded most truly! I stood at the door of the kitchen, witnessing the amusing spectacle, and could not help laughing! Indeed it was a most ludicrous sight. The cook in the kitchen had been hard at work ever since six o'olock the previous morning; and was still at it, making coffee and swearing in fine style. He was a Frenchman, and he did "sacre morbleau, tous les Anglais et les passagers," most eloquently "Avez vous du café," said I. "Oui, Monsieur; oui Monsieur, à prèsent," answered Crapeau. I stood waiting in the cold, until my patience was exhausted; "du café s'il vous plait," cried I; "du diable," muttered the Frenchman. At last I could wait no longer, and resolved to give up the idea of coffee, in the hopes of success in something else, so I asked for

" l'eau chaude" upon which my good friend jumped smartly, seized hold of a kettle full, and presented it to me. I then asked for a bottle of Port wine, some sugar, and glasses, all these were promptly delivered to me, and I hastened up stairs, my teeth chattering with cold. I brewed some hot port-wine negus, nice and strong; gave my wife a huge jorum of it; took a stiff glass myself; slipped off my shoes, jumped into bed and slept like a top! Oh the delight of a snooze after a weary day's journey! Oh the sweets of a *warm* bed, after a *cold* drive at midnight across the desert! I never enjoyed a sleep so much in my life. The bed's were comfortable plenty of blankets and clean sheets. My poor wife was sadly knocked up, so that this halt was of the utmost importance to her!

We were told that we should have to start early in the morning, at between three and four o'clock, and Mr. D. kindly promised to call us. I do not know when, and who called us. On awaking I found my wife up, ready dressed, and declaring to me, that I would be left behind, if I did not make haste! I certainly wished all the people in the place, any where else, and hurried on my things as fast as I could, broke my shins against the footstool, and went down into the hall. Here the rest of the party had assembled grumbling at having to turn out so early; and most heartily did I add my share to the general complaint: for we had scarcely had two hour's sleep, and there was no occasion after all for the hurry, as we did not start until six o'clock. However, as we were all up, and dressed, there was no use in

growling; so we resolved to make the best of it, and ordered tea, coffee and something to eat. Poor miserable greasy cook had to turn out again, and re-commence a task which he had left off but two hours ago.

How the poor fellow did "*diable*" and "*sacre*" us! But there was no help! Mr. D. went down stairs to him, and in a few minutes we had some stuff, more like black mud or ditch water, than tea or coffee, which nobody could touch. This was sent back to *Pauvre Francois* and a fresh supply demanded; this edition was better, and those who partook of it pronounced it so. I ran back to my bed room, for the remains of the port wine and took another warm brew of that, far superior to the tea or coffee.

By the time we had had what we wanted,

it was broad daylight, and we prepared for another start, which I beg permission to commence in another Chapter.

CHAPTER XIII.

An Early Start—Sunrise—The Cold—Antelopes—The Petrified Forest—Fertile Valley of the Nile—Arrival at No. 3—A Walk—Concluding Remarks.

It was daylight when we again started on our journey, glad to be off after having had to wait for so long a time. I looked at the Frenchman as we drove away. He was standing at the door of his kitchen; smoking a cigar, and looking as sulky as a bear; one of us cried out to him, "Bon jour, Monsieur cuisinier, avez vous"

plus de café. Non! parbleu!" said he, and disappeared. Poor man! I wonder how he likes his berth!

The sun rose beautifully as we pursued our journey, and showed us the extent of the desert; some of us fancied they saw the sea! but it was merely a flight of imagination: however, it was not to be wondered at, since the flat country in the distance had certainly the appearance of water. It was a lovely morning, and the cold, fresh air was delightful and bracing. We felt the effect of the cold most severely, in more ways than one; some had chillblains; some chapped hands and faces; some were so bad, that they could not shave themselves: as for myself, I suffered much from a sore mouth, both lips being so dreadfully affected, that any attempt at a laugh or smile was attended

with great pain. I wished much to have had a horse to take a good gallop over the plains; it was truly inviting, and became more so when we espied a herd of antelopes on a rising ground. A pretty picture, standing out in bold relief, against the cloudless sky behind them. On spying us, they made off, dashing over the ground, and throwing up the sand as they fled from us.

Here and for some distance, the road and ground round about, is strewed with, what at first seemed to me to be pieces of wood; and so they were, but in a state of petrifaction; in fact, quite stone: and as we drove along, we passed the petrified forest—a most wonderful and curious relic. We saw a portion of it, and beheld trunks and branches of trees lying about the place. I picked up several pieces, and

brought them away with me. When polished these stones are very pretty exhibiting the granulated veins of the wood well worthy of admiration.

After proceeding for about six or eight miles, we came to a rising ground, from whence we got a beautiful view of the low country, or as it is termed, *"the fertile valley of the Nile,"* known to the world as Lower Eygpt. The view was a most extensive one; as far as the eye could reach; and had it not been rather hazy, we should have been able to see the Mediterranean. It was most gratifying to behold trees and verdure, after sandy plains, and dreary wastes. The eye rests with pleasure on the one, as it gazes upon nature's beauties; and soon becomes weary of the other, as presenting to it her defects. In this instanee we were charmed, as we

beheld the green woods, cultivated fields, meandering river, all lying beneath us as it were; towns and villages; houses and cottages, scattered here and there; lofty minarets and mosques, raising their heads in towering grandeur over the trees; the scenery was quite different to what we had been accustomed in India. There all is hot and burning. Here, all seemed cool and delightful. The general appearance of the country had not that parched-up aspect; quite the contrary: all seemed fresh and luxuriant, notwithstanding the season of the year; and again what we were gazing upon, reminded us more of our own country than that of the east. The circumstance of mosques and minarets being visible in the landscape, however, dispelled the delusion; and convinced us, in glaring colours, that this was the land

of the Heathen, and not that of the Christian! We felt quite refreshed at what we saw, and, indeed, it amply compensated for the wearisome journey we had come—the knocking about in the vans and other disagreeables. Our fellow traveller told us, that if we looked out, we should soon catch a glimpse of the Pyramids of Egypt, as we were now approaching the ascent, from whence the whole country to the left is seen to great advantage. The reader may imagine, our anxiety better than I can describe it; we could not be otherwise than anxious to behold those wonders of the world, of which we had heard so much from our childhood. I ask the question, is it not worth while coming overland, to be able to see all these wonderful sights?

We arrived at Station No. 3, where we

again changed horses; during which operation, we took a walk to a small hill, or rising ground, close by, from the summit of which, Mr. D. pointed us out all the scenery below, and told us in what direction we should see the Pyramids. During our walk, we picked up some very good stones, and pebbles, large pieces of *conglomerate* and *agate*, petrified wood, and shells; each of us returning to the vans with our pockets filled with what, I dare say, the horses highly objected to; since our collections added in no slight degree, to the weight of the vans. When all was ready, we took our seats and drove on. I dare say, the reader is heartily wearied with this lengthy description of our drive across the desert; but, I trust, I shall be pardoned when I here say, that I have entered into particulars more with

a view to show how we journied, how we fared, and what we saw in our progress, than any of egotism on my part, or of exercising my power of description. Doubtless, the reader may have heard or read of the drawbacks of a journey through Egypt. I hope, by what I have written, and am still about to write, I shall convince him that things are not so bad as have been described; or, to use a vulgar phrase that, "the devil is not so black as he is painted." I cannot conclude this Chapter, however, without begging the kind reader's patience in following me to the end of my travels. They were most interesting to me; and I would fain hope, they will not only prove so, but also useful to him, should he ever be led by fortune's smiles, or her frowns, to traverse the same country, and see the same sights which

I did. Many there are, who have done so already; and, perhaps, seen more than I have; but my wishes are intended for those who have these pleasures in store; and, I heartily trust, that they will enjoy their wanderings, and appreciate them, as much as I did. Let us now see what the next Chapter is about. I do not think we have yet quite done with the desert.

CHAPTER XIV.

Reach No. 2, and a Breakfast—Distant View of the Pyramids—Change Horses at No. 1—Descent into Lower Egypt—Approach to Cairo—Tombs of Sultans—Ruins of Cavalry and Infantry Lines.

THE next station we came to was No. 2, where we had an excellent breakfast off cold roast fowls, ham, eggs by the dozens, tea and coffee, with beer and other beverage, for those who wished it. We could not help enjoying this meal; for everything was good, and our appetites sharpened by the cold morning air. I

think it was about ten o'clock when we came here; rather a fashionable hour, certainly, for a travelling *dejeuner;* but that was of little or no consequence. We had a long drive before us, and we were not to reach Cairo before three in the afternoon; so we had plenty of time to have a good look from this place at all that was to be seen. The Pyramids lay to our left. There they were, in all their ancient ugliness: I cannot use any other term, for there is great lack of architectural beauty and elegance in their form; they looked like three large hills cut into triangular shapes; but still there they were, the monuments of ages gone by, and yet to come; there were the pyramids, their beauty decidedly consisting in their ugliness, yet who would not wish to see them? They are worth looking at,

notwithstanding their ungainliness—the very circumstance of their having been the burial-place of the ancient Pharoahs, renders them objects of curiosity, leave alone that of their being considered amongst the wonders of the world! We saw them to great advantage, for the day was fine, and the atmosphere clear. I think we must have been from between fifteen to twenty miles distant from them, and yet they were as plain and as conspicuous as possible. Straight in front of us lay the City of Cairo, though we could not see it to advantage, owing to a haze lying over it, caused no doubt by the smoke. To our right lay the suburbs of the city, extensive gardens, plantations, and cultivated fields ; and still further was to be seen extending for miles and miles, the whole of the fertile country already alluded to.

We reached the last station No. 1 on the road, and there changed horses for the last time, preparatory to our driving into Cairo, from which we were not now far distant. Here we got out and stretched our legs again, and walked up to the telegraph station close by; from the summit of which we had an excellent view of the country around us; after which we started, looking forward with great pleasure to our reaching that ancient capital .the old Babylon of by gone days.

As we drove on we descended as it were into the lower country, the declivity was gradual and the road good, so we had no bumping, and wended onwards right merrily without interruption.

We were now approaching Cairo the great city of the Egyptians; where once reigned the well known Pharoah; where

Joseph held his regal sway ; and the very place, where were enacted the dreadful tragedies mentioned in Scripture ; those fearful exhibitions of divine wrath upon the Egyptians, in return for their persecutions of God's chosen people.

What an ancient city is Cairo ! How many thousands of years have passed away since it first became the seat of Egyptian Royalty, how many ages have gone by, and generations passed away, since Cairo had first a name ! There she stands, in her usual place, the very same she took up when first she sprang from the earth, and reared her head towards sky ! Yes, we were now going to see this famous city, this venerable and still flourishing relic of antiquity. Cultivated patches of land ; small buildings, such as cottages, huts, bridges, and old

tombs, lay scattered on either side of the road, which led us to the city. In the distance to our right we caught a glimpse of the Padsha's stables, an extensive range of buildings, well worth the attention of the traveller. I forget the how many, Mr. D. told me; but there are an enormous number of horses kept and bred in these stables; and those of the best and purest Arab blood.

The next objects which met our view, and attracted attention, were several beautiful tombs; which I was told were those of the Sultans. In fact the plain on either side was covered with graves, giving to the idea, (at first sight,) more the appearance of a city than any thing else. In very truth the city of the dead! tombs and mosques, having domes beautifully executed, with pillars of the most exquisite Moslem architecture, a style peculiarly

different from that to which Europeans are generally accustomed, and which is to be met with only in Oriental countries. Some of the roofs of these tombs are perfect, and gave us ample food for admiration, and we wondered that such light and delicate workmanship, should stand the test of time so well as they had done; while others again are fast crumbling into nothingness and decay. And here lay, in their silent graves, many a proud Sultan; who erst ruled thousands of warriors, with despotic sway; and now the hand which bore the sceptre or wielded the scimitre, is laid low in the dust! I cannot tell the extent, of this burial ground; indeed I am afraid to hazard an opinion on the subject, lest I go beyond the mark, or not do justice to its measurement, suffice to say that it is one of the

largest I have ever seen, and the graves so thickly crowded that there did not seem to me to be even room for a person to walk amongst them! This however is not the onlyplace of interment at Cairo; there are several on the other side of the city; and I dare say if the plague continues its dreadful ravages, fresh ground will be required for the dead.

After driving past these tombs, we came upon some high ground, from whence we had a good view of the city. There lay this famous Cairo, with her many tall minarets, rearing their heads above the haze and smoke! Twas a beautiful sight indeed. Our pace was more slow than it had hitherto been, we were consequently able to observe things as we came upon them in succession.

We drove through ruins of huts, which

I immediately remarked must be lairs for troops; laid out exactly as are those for our regiments in India. Mr. D. informed me that when a portion of the army was here, these were the lines for the cavalry on one side of the road, and for the infantry on the other. They were very extensive indeed, and from what I could see of them, they appeared to have been sufficient to contain about six or eight regiments. Here it was very dusty, and disagreeable. Four vans driving one after the other, the people on the road, cattle of all sorts, created a cloud of dust which almost suffocated us. We certainly did now meet with sand "*up to the mast head,*" but *none* in the desert. Farewell, thou mighty desert; dreadful wilderness, I have seen thee, journied across thee, and thou hast proved a much more agreeable

acquaintance than I had anticipated. If ever I return to old England again, I shall pay thee another visit, and hope we shall be as good friends then, as we were when we parted in the year 1843. And now we have done. The reader will I hope follow me in the remainder of my journey with more pleasure than he has (or must have) done during that dreary portion of it which has treated so much of this self-same desert.

CHAPTER XV.

Entrance to Cairo—Women—Arrival at the Hotel The effects of our journey—Baggage, and the weighing of it—Remarks.

PASSING by the Lines, we took a turn to the right, the road leading to one of the gates of the city. The entrance to Cairo was an earnest of what we were to expect when we got into the place itself. The road lay between tall, *prickly-pear hedges*; broken down walls of mud; and enormous mounds of rubbish; which must have been

accumulating for many a year. Filth and dirt on all sides, and *flies* innumerable! The natives eat the leaves of the prickly-pear bush as vegetables, and I believe the fruit is used by them medicinally.

For the first time we had a sight of Egyptian women; such horrid, disgusting objects I never saw! Their peculiar garb and filthy appearance, was sufficient to condemn them in my estimation. How different from the beautiful creatures we had been accustomed to see in India! With them, every thing is calculated to draw forth exclamations of admiration. With these, nothing but loathsome displeasure. These females, (if they can be called such, and yet I do not know what else they can be called, for they are still women,) were wending their way homewards, with earthern pitchers of water

on their heads. Just look at the numerous representations of these creatures, gentle reader, and mark their peculiar attire; those things coming over the face, dangling down, for all the world like an elephant's proboscis, on a small scale; behold the remainder of their clothes, how very ungraceful; and so little befitting any of the gentle sex! True is it that every country has its peculiar costume. Egypt certainly stands second to none in the want of elegance of that of her women! Their pitchers too, did you ever see such unweildy things in all your life? They are just the same now, in point of shape as what were used in the days of Pharoah. The Egyptians are behind hand with other countries in the shapes and forms even of their pots and pans. But let us proceed into the city without delay.

We drove in (no easy matter either) at snail's pace; and stopped at the Transit Company's stables, the narrowness of the streets preventing farther progress. Here we got out, and were shown to the hotel, termed, if I recollect, "The Hotel de l'Europe;" but I am not quite certain on that point; however, to this hotel we repaired, and were heartily greeted by our fellow passengers, already arrived before us. The first thing I did was to secure a room; and fortunately succeeded in one very comfortable, with two beds in it, and other appurtenances to boot. There was a "*table d'hote*" every day for breakfast, luncheon, and dinner; but as I had an invalid in my party we preferred taking our meals in our own room, which we always did. I think I breakfasted once or twice with the rest. We had every thing we

required at the hotel. The supplies were excellent, wines good, and the attendance tolerable; the only fault I had to find was the tea, which was bad; and really on examination the leaves were more like peach than tea, a circumstance I would not have credited unless I had seen it with my own eyes! Let that, however, pass by, we had every reason to be pleased with the hotel, their charges are moderate, though not so much so as the opposition over the way. "*L'hotel de l'orient,*" is, however, the first rate in the city, and more frequented than our's.

My poor wife was dreadfully knocked up suffering from a severe cold and cough; so that she was obliged to keep her bed during the whole time we were at Cairo, a circumstance I the more regretted since she was thereby prevented seeing any of

the sights of the place. After a nice wash and clean clothes and a comfortable supper, I put her to bed very soon after our arrival. A night's rest after a fatiguing journey works wonders with a person. I think we arrived at Cairo at about four o'clock in the afternoon and there was to be no dinner until seven, so I had dinner and tea together at six, and retired to bed soon after. I never slept so well as I did on this occasion, the rest at the half way house was nothing to be compared to this one.

I awoke in the morning, put on my dressing gown, and went out into the passage; from one of the windows of which I looked into the Inn yard beneath; and was rejoiced to find that all our lnggage had just arrived, and was piled in a heap in the centre of the yard. I looked for

my own, and was satisfied at seeing that all had come safe, even that hamper of water.

Each passenger is allowed a certain quantity of luggage, both in size and weight. In order to ascertain that all is correct, a weighing machine was rigged up and the process of weighing commenced after we had our breakfast: each man's trunk or portmanteau was put down; his name, and the weight of each article, carefully noted. All mine were correct. I had therefore nothing to fear, but several had extra to pay, much to their annoyance, as they had not anticipated any ordeal of the sort.

I think this regulation quite correct, as the quantity of luggage allowed is liberal, and people should not take advantage of the liberality, by attempting to carry

more than they really require. There is no necessity for overland travellers burdening themselves with luggage. The clothing requisite for the whole voyage is a very small supply, say for forty days, at the utmost, and the other things are few also. I brought two small trunks and a portmanteau, and my wife the same; which with a carpet bag and hat box, was all we had; and we were within the regulated quantity. Some ladies there were among our passengers, who brought with them huge boxes and trunks, as if they were going a voyage round the world! Nicely too, had they to pay for all this! I think they must have been rather astonished when they had to open their purses at Cairo!

I was advised to take my boxes up into my room, and to make preparations for

the river voyage to Alexandria, and to arrange so as to preclude the necessity of opening my trunks again. This I did, and it was a great comfort to take a fresh supply of clean linen and other things. We had not the slightest idea how long we were to stay here. We were told, that as soon as the river steamers came up, we should be able to start; and that, perhaps, would be in about three or four days; so we made up our minds to have a good rest, and to see all the wonderful sights of this famous old city. There was no plague going on —indeed, scarcely any sickness; so we had everything in our favour—fine weather, and lots of time; and we were determined to enjoy ourselves as much as we could. There was plenty to see and to admire. The people were civil (although

we were *kafirs* (infidels), and money does wonders with Moslems as well as with other folks; we had, therefore, the way clear before us. Oh! how I longed to go about.

CHAPTER XVI.

Cairo — Streets and Houses — Shops and Shopkeepers—Inhabitants—European Residents and Others—Turkish Bazaar—The Slave Market—The Mosques.

I HAVE undertaken a difficult task in attempting a description of Cairo—a thing which has been so often done, much better than any humble effort on my part can accomplish. I trust my picture will be drawn, at all events, with accuracy though the colouring be of a secondary nature.

The day after our arrival was devoted to a ramble (or rather a *scramble*) over the city. We hired donkeys with boys attached, and previous to starting took into my service, as a temporary arrangement, one, of a crowd of fellows, who thronged the entrance; and who offered themselves as *dragomen*, or servants. These men are most useful. They possess a fund of interesting information; can speak English pretty well; are good humoured; aud are generally faithful rascals;—labourers well worthy of their hire, for without them you cannot get on at Cairo; and what you have to pay them is nothing compared to the benefit you derive in having one of them in your train. The donkyes are strong, surefooted beasts, with a sort of pack-saddle with stirrups—very comfortable things

indeed. I mounted one of these, and, with my lad Abdoolah, sallied forth into the streets, of which I may as well here say something at once. Their narrowness is such, that I declare, in some parts, I have found them barely a yard wide; and few of them beyond six or eight feet. The crowds of people passing and re-passing; richly dressed Shaikhs and Effendis, mounted on horses, and armed to the teeth; donkeys and mules, carrying whole Harems escorted by their eunuchs as black as Lucifer; Arabs on their camels and dromedaries; mules with water bags; carts and vehicles of various sorts; people on foot; all render it a matter of difficulty to make much way.

There is a general appearance of decay in the houses of Cairo—most of them seemed to be worn out and tottering to

the ground; indeed, I saw several with timber-props placed against the walls; and whilst I was riding through one dark street, a house came down as I had but just passed it—a narrow escape! In those streets where there are no shops, the buildings are so close, that the upper stories are nearly joined; indeed quite so. All the windows (and they are small too) have a sort of projection, more like little balconies; and they almost fit into each other, as it were: the consequence is, that you catch an occasional glimpse from below, of the sky, and there is but a scanty supply of daylight.

There are a great variety of shops in certain parts of the city, kept by Europeans, Turks, and Arabs; apothecaries, tailors, cloth merchants, crockery warehouses, grocers, saddlers, shoe-makers,

gun, pistol, and sword manufacturers; also, little eating and drinking shops, in great profusion. The fruit and vegetable stalls are to be seen every where; to approach one of these is quite an undertaking; for as soon as you get near, you are instantly covered with swarms of flies, which settle on the fruit, in such numbers, that they are quite hid by them; it is a common thing to see these dreadful pests clustering at the corners of the mouths and eyes of the dirty children, the latter taking no notice of them whatsoever. Besides the shops, there are numerous ragged fellows wandering about with trays on their heads, vending cakes, biscuits, loaves of bread, and disgusting sweetmeats; also, men with large bags of water, crying it in the streets, for so much a drink; there

are also hawkers stalking about with all sorts of trash for sale; crying their wares up and down. The shops, on either side of the streets, are dirty holes, covered with filth up to the very articles for sale; the proprietors sit crosslegged on their little benches, puffing at their *kaliouns* or *hookhahs*, with the greatest *nonchalance* possible, caring for nobody, and generally in a state of sleepy torpor, from the effects of the great quantity of opium they mix up in the stuff they smoke.

The inhabitants of Cairo are so mixed, that is to say, there are so many of different parts of the world residing there, that it is really a matter of difficulty to distinguish the natives of the place from the rest; suffice to say, that taking the population as a whole, they are a most dirty, miserable set. I allude, of course,

to the people—the *plebs.* of the city—badly clad, covered with filth, swarming with vermin—their bodies a mass of sores; eyes and mouths almost full of flies; they are, indeed, most disgusting objects—men as well as women. What we saw at Suez are not a bit worse; and bad was the the best with *them*—poor wretches! There are, of course, exceptions, and I have seen many a well-dressed man walking or riding through the streets. So many Europeans reside here, and are generally so nicely apparelled, that I am surprised the rest do not improve in their personal appearance; but to follow the example of a *Christian,* is an unpardonable offence in a Moslem, who would prefer suffering any privation than do so. The generality of the respectable Moslems at Cairo, are Turks, who are the leading members of

society. They possess all the wealth, and enjoy all the luxuries which it commands. They live in the best houses, and fare sumptuously; whilst the poor miserable natives eke out a pitiful existence, in the most poverty-stricken, abject manner, living in the purlieus of the city, and many of them starving to death.

The despised Jews throng at Cairo in great numbers; they are the same in personal appearance and character as any where else. Who cannot tell a Jew from any other human being? They are a marked people, scorned by Turk as well as by Christian! But their restoration is close at hand.

The European residents are chiefly French and Italians, with a few English; but there are very few from other parts of Europe. The French and Italians carry

on much business in the city; a number of both are employed as artisans by the Padsha, in building and ornamenting. I believe there are several thousand of these men in his service—a good thing for them, as I doubt not he is a good paymaster.

I witnessed a number of black Africans in the streets; and, upon inquiry, was informed, that they were slaves belonging to the rich Turks and Sheikhs. Some of them were prancing along on barbed steeds, richly caparisoned; and these, I was told were freemen, or emancipated slaves, who had purchased their freedom, and were now upon their own footing; calling themselves *effendis* or private gentlemen! Some of them had slaves in their own trains; I never saw such saucy looking rascals in all my life, galloping

about, with their sabres dangling by their sides, pistols in their holsters, and looking as brave as *Roostums!* I dare say they would scamper off fast enough at sight of the bright flash of a British bayonet glittering before them.

There is, likewise, a sect of people at Cairo, converted Arabs—Christians, in fact, who are, I am told, increasing in number yearly. I met one or two of these, and had some conversation with them. From what they said, they appeared to understand the advantages of the Christian religion over that of Moslemism. There are missionaries here, whose exertions are indefatigable in propagating the blessed Gospel amongst the heathen. The Scriptures are translated into the Arabic, and circulated amongst the natives.

The converts *now* are better than they used to be about ten or twelve years ago. Then, there was little difference between the Christian and the heathen; so little indeed, as materially to impede the progress amongst the Mahometans. Time, however, works wonders; and, by the blessing of the Almighty, it is to be hoped that these nations, which are now sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, will see light; and that the joyful tidings of salvation, will, ere long, be sounded from the tops of the towering minarets, instead of the fanatical proclamations of the bigotted Muezzin.

I rode into the Turkish bazaar, but was glad to get away from it as fast as I could. There was nothing worth seeing there; and the stench and flies were so disagreeable, that I made haste and left

the place. I certainly saw much to tempt me to spend my money. Dresses, shawls, swords, daggers, pistols, pipes, caps, and shoes, and many other things, which I cannot enumerate. I looked for some good *ghoolab* (rose-water,) but found none; some *utter* (otto of roses), but there was none worth having. I was surprised at the dearness of the articles for sale; as to any abatement in the prices, that was quite out of the question.

I passed by the slave market, but did not go in. I wished not to behold the pitiful sight of my fellow-creatures being put up for sale like so many head of cattle. I have heard, however, that the trade is carried on with much profit, not only to the vender, but to the poor wretches vended. The latter gets a portion of the price given for himself,

with a view to setting up on first starting in his capacity of slave. Some of these poor creatures lead a dreadful life, while others, more fortunate, very soon manage to buy themselves free, when they either return to their native land, or remain where they are; the latter being preferable, as their going back involves a probability of a second edition of slavery, by their being re-captured and re-sold.

I saw some very fine old mosques in the course of my ride; beautiful specimens of architecture in the Oriental style. Into these I was informed I might go, but with the proviso of taking off my shoes and stockings; as no *infidels* were permitted to approach the precincts, even, of the sacred building, except barefooted: this I was not at all willing to do, so I passed by the mosques

without entering them. I believe there is a great deal worth seeing in the interior ; more, however of exquisitely delicate workmanship, in the ornamental parts of the edifice, than anything else. I have seen many mosques in India, and I fancy they are generally alike. I did not, therefore, consider myself in any way the loser by not having gone over those in Cairo. I returned home to my dinner, dreadfully tired with my day's work. I had seen much to amuse, much to please, and much to disgust me ; but, altogether, I was glad I had taken the ride. I would not have missed it for any thing. There is a great deal worth seeing in Cairo ; and I would strongly recommend every body visiting that city, to stay a few days ; for every place and sight cannot be seen in a shorter space of time than a week, at the

least. I should be happy to revisit Cairo; for, notwithstanding the plague and other drawbacks, it is a place deserving the traveller's notice.

CHAPTER XVII.

A Drive — Olive Plantations — Factories — The House in which General Kleber was assassinated.

The next day, my worthy friend, Mr. D., called in a carriage and pair, and took my party a drive to see the other side of the city; and several sights which he was kind enough to say, he would show us.

Immediately after breakfast, we walked down to where the carriage was, and started in joyful anticipations of a pleasant day. Mr. D. was a most agreeable

companion during our excursion, and proved himself a real friend whilst he was with us. His kindness and invariable attention to us, I shall ever feel thankful for; and, should these pages ever meet his eye, I trust he will be able to say, that I feel such a thing as gratitude for his goodness to us during our sojourn in Cairo.

Our drive lay through long avenues of trees regularly planted. The roads were pretty good, and there were several very handsome European houses and gardens on either side. There appeared to be a great deal of cultivation going on, even at that unusual season of the year; but, I fancy, December in Egypt, is nearly the same as March and April in England. I say this, from the circumstance of my having seen cart-loads

of Spring vegetables, and very fine they seemed too. Olive plantations extended a good way, belonging to the Padsha, who, I was informed, made a profitable revenue from the produce of the trees. These, however, seemed small and young, so that there could not be much fruit from them.

I saw several factories, which my friend told me, were conducted on a very superior scale; all belonging to, and supervised by, the Padsha himself. We did not visit any of them, as we had not time to do so. From the huge chimneys smoking, I presumed there must have been a great deal of work going on. I believe there is also a printing establishment in Cairo, carried on in a most expert manner, and giving hope of vast improvements in that art, before many years have past;

[illegible]. The printing at Cairo beats that of several more civilized countries in the world. Steam is used to great advantage; but, all those who work the engines are Europeans, the Pasha's chief engineers are Englishmen, with a few French, as assistants.

Mr. D. pointed us out the house in which Napoleon's substitute in Egypt, General Kleber, resided, and in which he was murdered. It is a long, two-storied building, and was, at the time we saw it, untenanted. His was a melancholy end! He was stabbed by a Mahometan fanatic, named Sooliman Alli Beg, who, taking advantage of the concealment afforded, by a ruinous cistern, whence a flight of steps led to a terrace, on which the unfortunate General was accustomed to walk, sprung upon, and despatched his victim,

by a single blow. The assassin, when taken up, pleaded the inspiration of heaven, for delivering his country from the enemy of his Sovereign and the Prophet.

The main object of our drive was to visit the Padsha's beautiful pleasure gardens at *Shoobrah;* which, we were informed, were worthy of inspection; and, as I think, the subject of our visit, requires to be dwelt upon rather lengthily, the best way, perhaps, will be, to devote another chapter to it.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A Visit to the Gardens at Shoobrah—The Beauties of the Gardens—Men employed—The Marble Bath, and its numerous Fountains—Summer-House—The Harem—Aviary, and other Buildings.

On arrival at the principal gate entering the gardens, Mr. D. kindly told us, that we were at liberty to walk over the whole, but picking flowers or fruit was objected to; and requested that we should abstain from doing so. It was probable that the gardeners, or guides, would present us with both in abundance. We promised

to act up to his injunctions, and proceeded forthwith upon our walk. I shall never forget my feelings of pleasure and astonishment, as I wandered over this lovely place. It seemed to me, as if a vision of fairy land had burst upon me. All that I had ever read of in Eastern tales descriptive of the beauties of gardens, conveying to the vivid imagination, scenes peculiar only to a paradise, were here verified. The wonders of the Arabian Nights were here before us, in glaring colours. This was, indeed, the *Baghwu-Bahar** of Cairo. Here, all that I had before seen, was quite forgotten. Here, indeed, every thing was lovely. I walked, in very truth, in the most enchanting spot I had ever visited. Shoo-

* The Garden of Spring.

brah! Shoobrah! Never shall I forget thee! The walks are straight as lines can be drawn; are, some of them, a quarter of a mile in length, with flowering shrubs on either side; beautifully cut box and myrtle hedges, lined the walks; and arches of orange, lemon, jessamine, and roses, overhead, all the full length, from one end to the other. These walks run at right angles to each other, and where they meet, there are fountains and *jettes d'eau* throwing up water, which sparkles beautifully in the sun-beam. Orange, citron, lemon, and pomegranite trees, in full bearing, bending to the earth, from the weight of the fruit, bowing, as it were, most gracefully, in grateful acknowledgment of the bounties which she confers upon them.

The delightful fragrance, of the im-

mence variety of flowers, was at times quite overpowering! Trees in well selected groups, with imitation chairs, tables, and couches, cut into shapes from trees themselves. Fruit of all sorts, and from all parts of the world, were seen in abundance! I could have walked over garden for a whole day without tiring! These gardens are watered in an ingenious manner by means of pipes which communicate with a large tank or reservoir; the water coming from the Nile. The number of men required to keep this in order must be great. Each walk had five or six with a head man or superintendant. The principal gardener must be in very truth, a prince of gardeners, if we were to judge from the appearance, and high state of his charge. There were a number of very fair looking men also in the

gardens; these I was told were Greeks: they are well paid and consequently better off than if in their own country. We were particularly struck with the peculiar manner in which some of the walks were paved—with stones and small pebbles, brought all the way from the desert —white, black, and brown; some representing trees, some buildings, human beings, birds, beast, and fishes. The greater part of this famous garden is after one described in an Eastern tale. I forget which; however, all descriptions of them amongst our oriental authors, are upon a par! but really this one of Shoobrah is a *goolistan* (or country of roses) in every sense of the word; for I never, in my life, beheld such a profusion of roses, and in such beautiful variety, as I did here. How our ladies longed to pick them!

But they had no occasion; for the gardeners in the different walks supplied us most liberally with large bouquets, in return for which, of course, they received something far preferable to themselves. I saw several very stately-looking gentlemen, walking about; these, I was informed, were superintendants of the establishment; they looked at us several times, and one came up with a patronising look, and addressed me with, "*Salaam alik;*"* I returned the salute with an "*Alaiakoom salaam,*"* which made the man stare, and he said something in Arabic, which I did not understand, though the word, *bukhsheesh,* solved the sentence at once. I gave him a shrug of the shoulder, and nothing else; however, I again met him before leaving

* Terms of oriental salutation.

the garden, when I put a shilling into his hands, at which he appeared perfectly satisfied. Mr. D. told me, that, notwithstanding his grand dress, had I given him a penny, instead of a shilling, he would not have refused. Charity, it is said, covers a multitude of sins; here, fine dress covers meanness as well as avarice.

After feasting on the beauties of this much to be admired garden, we were led in another direction to look at the Padsha's marble bath. The entrance of it is a largee gateway; constructed entirely of Egyptian marble. There were men stationed at the entrance, to whom of course, we gave the usual key towards the opening of the gates; which admitted us immediately. We came into an extensive square, covered on all sides, by a verandah about thirty feet wide, supported by

elegant marble pillars, and the floor inlaid with variegated marble, giving a pleasing effect. The roof is painted in most gaudy colourings; representing various pieces; landscapes; sea and shipping; steam-boats in great profusion; nothing very tasty to a Euorpean, but peculiarly so to the orientals, and they have very queer notions of the fine arts, as is a fact well known by all who have had any intercourse with these people.

At each corner of this grand square is a spacious apartment, elegantly furnished, quite in the oriental style, with rich Turkey carpets, divans, ottomans, and chandeliers; looking-glasses, or mirrors, from top to bottom, and the ceilings gorgeously painted, as before described. These apartments are warmed by flues running round and under the flooring,

and are intended for the Great Padsha and his family, to perform the necessary operations of the toilet previous to their partaking of the pleasures of the bath.

In the centre of this quadrangle is the bath itself; and I am really afraid to mention the size of this immense place; suffice to say, it is a very large one, calculated to bathe all the Padshas, their harems, eunuchs, and household domestics in the east! I should say it was about fifteen feet deep. It can be made shallower at pleasure. The whole is composed entirely of marble. In the centre is a square island, with steps of marble, and figures of dolphins and sea-monsters on either side. Orange-trees in full bearing; rose and jessamines in full bloom; and seats most invitingly arranged, form, at once, a delightful

resting-place for the bathers; — very delightful, no doubt. Here the Padsha of all the Egypts, bathes and swims about with his nymphs; takes a rest when he is tired; by visiting this enchanting little island, eats fresh oranges from the tree, and pelts his companions with the peel— the dear old man! A nice pastime for so great a monarch! The *tout ensemble* of this truly beautiful place, is elegant and tasteful in the extreme. There were several workmen employed in making alterations and repairs; indeed, where-ever we went, there were some improvements going on evincing the taste of his highness, and a wish to cultivate anything that may tend towards the advancement of civilization in his own dominions. This famous bath, I must here inform the reader, is watered from the Nile, and filled by

means of innumerable *jettes d'eau*, extending all round the four sides of the square, as well as of the island; waters spouting out from the mouths of lions, and dolphins, and snakes, and frogs, &c. &c., all exquisitely carved out of white and black marble. People were employed in cleaning this bath, and scraping the bottom, while we were there. I think there must have been upwards of a hundred men at work at the time. At my request, the cock, which lets out the water, was turned, and all the fountains suddenly commenced playing; sprinkling the poor fellows below, and making them scamper about, much to our amusement, and that of the lookers-on. To make up, however, for the wetting, I threw in amongst them, a handfull of small coin, and a precious scramble there was on that day,

in the bath of his Highness the Padsha of Egypt.

After this, we left the bath and went in another direction, to see the other buildings about the gardens. There is a very pretty little summer-house situated on a rising ground, or hillock, to which we were conducted. The approach is from one of the garden-walks from the bath, by means of a covered way. The whole presents a very agreeable aspect, and is very tastefully laid out, with parterres of lovely flowers and shrubs, rising one over the other to the top of the mound. The building itself is polygonal, with doors to each side, and in the centre of the interior, is a *jette d'eau* and fountain, with steps, leading down, of marble. This room, (and it is only one) is elegantly furnished and carpetted,

with divans, *musmuds,* or cushions, on all sides; mirrors, vases, &c. &c., a quiet and cool retreat, for the Padsha, when his Highness spends his leisure hours, with his favourites of the *seraglio.* A flight of steps in the rear of the building leads down to the harem, which is a queer-looking edifice, adapted, no doubt, for the purposes for which it is intended; all the windows and doors having net-work before them, and otherwise contrived, so that no intrusive eye can penetrate the mysteries of the *sacred* abode; and guarded in such a manner that no stranger can possibly enter the precincts of it. At the time of our visit, all the ladies were away with the Padsha in Upper Egypt. I suppose they are not to be trusted out of his sight, since they are taken with his Highness where-

soever he travels. We could not go into this building, of course; so we were obliged to be content with the outside view of it, leaving the imagination to picture to us the secrecies of the interior. I must say, there was nothing to admire in the exterior. I thought it a dirty-looking affair, for the residence of the Padsha's women.

The next building we visited was an aviary—an enormous wire cage in which there were a few miserable cockatoos, of different sorts; some pigeons, and one or two sparrows. The keeper told us that most of the birds had been removed to Alexandria, and that the rest had died; that the Padsha was very fond of birds, and had once several which could talk beautifully, and repeat whole sentences from the *Koran*. There was one old

parrot, which his Highness valued much, as it served to amuse him vastly by swearing and cursing in good English. There were other places which we saw in this neighbourhood: for instance, a warm bath and dressing and sleeping apartments, elegantly furnished; the bedding on the floor, with rich gauze and silk curtains, reaching in canopied folds, from the top to the bottom, and fastened with cords and tassels of crimson and gold.

We were delighted with what we had seen, and returned home late, dreadfully tired with our day's work. Glad, indeed, were we when we found ourselves seated in the carriage on our way to the hotel. We drove back by another road, and saw many other sights, too numerous for me to record in this place. Mr. D. was indefatiable in his attentions; and the informa-

tion he gave us was most edifying. The ladies were quite charmed with him; and, indeed, they had every reason to be so, since they could not have had a more agreeable and gentlemanly person for their *cicerone* than he proved himself to be, during this interesting excursion, and subsequently. He promised to come for us the next day early, as we had plenty more worth seeing. We agreed to be ready whenever he called, and again thanked him most gratefully for his kindness to us. What a very pleasant day we had! And with what an appetite did we sit down to our dinner!

CHAPTER XIX.

Botanical Gardens at Rhoda—A Grotto—The supposed spot where Moses was picked up—A Party to the Pyramids—Mummies—Relics for Sale.

At the appointed hour, next day, we walked down to where the carriage was, and drove off in an opposite direction to the one we had gone previously.

We saw several very fine large buildings, more after the European style of architecture than any we had yet seen. Our drive terminated at a quay, on the banks of the Nile; where we embarked in a

ferry-boat, and were rowed across to a flight of steps leading to one of the entrances to the Padsha's botanical gardens, situated on an island called *Rhoda.* The garden, I was told, was established by Ibrahim Padsha, the son of Mahommed Ali. It reflects great credit on his taste, and is, in my humble opinion, a very fair specimen of horticultural skill. It is beautifully laid out, and abounds in numerous plants, and trees, and vegetables, from all parts of the world. It is managed by a Scotchman, who, I suppose is well paid for his trouble. Rhoda Garden is more like one of our own country than Shoobrah; the walks and beds, and box-wood hedges nicely cut, and trimmed, fruit nailed to the walis; the seats under the trees, all reminded us of England.

The garden is irrigated by means of canals, some of stone, bricks and mortar; and others, merely dug in the earth. These run along the whole extent of the walks which are well gravelled. There are several buildings in the gardens and amongst them a grotto, which, we were informed, had been constructed by the head gardener himself. We visited it, and were highly gratified with the tasteful way in which it was built, and the manner the shells were arranged. The Padsha is very proud of the grotto; and, moreover, very jealous lest visitors should damage it, by carrying away the shells, or writing their names on the stones, &c.; extraordinary propensities, inherent, I believe, only in Englishmen! and which travellers see so beautifully displayed and recorded wherever they go? Mr. D.

told me, that only a few days previous to our visit, he had come to this grotto with a party of ladies and gentlemen, and some of them had mischievously extracted several shells from different parts of the building; this was observed by one of the people belonging to the garden, and reported accordingly; the consequences were, a severe censure on Mr. D., for allowing such thieving, (for it cannot be called otherwise) and restrictions for the future; preventing visitors from entering the garden, or grotto, without special sanction of the authorities. It is indeed, a glaring shame that people cannot keep their hands from picking and stealing, when they visit places of this or any other description; but such is the habit, and will be, I suppose, to the end of the chapter!

We were shown the supposed spot where Moses was picked up from among the bulrushes.* The place has nothing remarkable about it, save a thick clump of these rushes; and the Arabs draw their conclusions as to this being the identical spot where the future ruler of the Israelites was concealed in his fragile bark, in consequence of its being the only place on the banks of the Nile where bulrushes have *ever been known* to grow! And as these traditions are most faithfully handed down by their ancestors, and carefully noted down amongst the natives of the country, it is generally believed to be true; particularly, as it tallies with Holy Writ, in as much as that the infant *was* found in an *ark*, or basket, floating

* Called *flags*, in the Bible.

on the water, and concealed amongst the rushes. The argument is, I think, conclusive; and becomes more so, when we consider, that in the neighbourhood are to be seen ruins which are pointed out as those of most remote and ancient date, supposed to be a portion of Egyptian Babylon, and of the palace where resided that famous king, the dread and terror of the persecuted children of Israel; that other Pharoah "*who knew not Joseph!*"

It was late in the afternoon when we re-crossed the Nile, and drove back to our hotel. A party had just arrived as we entered the yard. They were some of our fellow-passengers—ladies and gentlemen, who had been on an excursion to the Pyramids. They looked most dreadfully knocked up, and tired, the females particularly; and upon in-

quiry as to how they had enjoyed themselves, I was told, that I had been very wise for having staid at home, as the Pyramids were not worth going to see! They had been obliged to ride about seven or eight miles on donkeys and mules; some of them had had falls; and when they had arrived there, they had seen nothing more than the day before, at a distance of fifteen miles. Some of them had clambered up to the top, but not *one* had ventured inside. This last surprised me; to go the distance these folks did, *without* entering one of the Pyramids, appeared to me a wonderful want of curiosity. I was told, that the view from the summit is nothing. Lord Lindsay, in his letters, tells a different tale: he says, mentioning his visit there, "It is a fatiguing business, climbing up; but, once up,

all is repaid. Such a view! The desert on one side, stretching away into Libya; waves beyond waves, as far as the eye can reach; the Vale of Egypt on the other, green as if Hope had chosen it as her peculiar home, with a thousand little canals traversing it in every direction, left by the retiring Nile; for the inundations had scarcely subsided." * *

What a difference! I must confess that our folks evinced great want of taste in the picturesque, the sublime or the beautiful; the old saying, that *tastes differ*, is well applied in comparing the description giving me by the party I allude to with that of Lord Lindsay, who appears to have enjoyed what my friends were so disappointed with. I can only add, that I regretted much my not having visited these Pyramids, my only excuse is, that

I did not wish to leave my party for any length of time; and, as one of them was unable to accompany me, I preferred driving about the gardens, as already described to going the distance which they were from Cairo.

One or two there were of the passengers who visited the mummy pits (as they are called) and who brought away mummies and other relics. I saw one of these extraordinary things—a mummy—it was the remains of a female, but a more disgusting object I never before witnessed. The person who had secured it, had been obliged to go to a great expense in employing a party of Arabs to dig for him; and these rascals consented to work upon most exorbitant terms, declaring that if they were not employed, they would inform against him for attempting to steal

a mummy, which is strictly prohibited; so that they were willing to connive at the thing, with the proviso of being well remunerated; failing which, they would bring to the notice of the authorities what they themselves were ready to encourage.

There were several relics of antiquity brought into the yard of the inn, for sale, such as remains of the sacred birds in earthern jars, images, lamps, and other things; some of these I purchased, but threw away, as being too cumbersome to carry about; indeed, I believe we were all imposed upon, for I really think that the sacred bird was nothing but an old jar full of brown earth, and the other articles made up to *gull* us Englishmen, who are always more ready and eager to be taken in than any one else; at least,

I have heard that such is the case. Is it so, or is it not so?

There was daily a crowd at the inn door of all sorts of people; dragomen seeking employment; donkey-boys, with their dumb beasts ready caparisoned, jabbering and wrangling with each other; ruffianly looking fellows with swords, battle-axes, maces, and clubs, for sale. Others with Turkish pipes, and tobacco; some with dresses, caps, and other articles of wearing apparel; such a noise, and such a medley of costumes and languages, I never saw or heard before; and this scene from morning to night, during the whole time of our stay at Cairo! There was positively no driving the crowd away.

CHAPTER XX.

Citadel — A Funeral — Fortifications — The View from the Walls—Ordnance on the Works—Troops —One-eyed Soldiers—Remarks—Mameluke Massacre—The Padsha's New Mosque—Jeseph's Well —Potiphar's House.

THE day succeeding the adventures related in the last chapter, I mounted a donkey, and taking Abdoollah for my guide, rode on to the citadel, situated outside the city, on an eminence, commanding the whole of the country round about. The road lay through another burying-ground,

in passing which, I witnessed a funeral procession, and stopped to watch the way in which matters were conducted. I need not enter into a lengthened detail of this mournful ceremony, since it was the same, in every respect, as what we see in all Oriental countries. The people were Moslems; the corpse was carried on a bier, covered with flowers; the religious persons walked in front, chaunting the usual prayers; and the followers gave the response; when it reached the grave, the body was lowered into it; the earth thrown over it; some repetitions from the Koran were made, and the business was over.

The approach to the citadel is very steep indeed; and, looking at the frowning battlements, and enormous height of the walls, from the distance, the mind is struck with the apparent strength of the

whole; indeed, naturally, the situation of the citadel is strong, well calculated for the purposes of defence; and, I doubt not, were it in better hands, it could be rendered almost impregnable, if the term can be applied to modern fortifications, when artillery has arrived to such perfection. However, I was much astonished to find, that I was wrong in my surmise, regarding the strength of this fortress. The works are irregular; the walls, though high, are more or less in a ruinous state; there did not seem to me to be any flanking fire from any of the batteries; and, as for ditches, I saw none. Certainly, the lofty situation required none, though ditches are desirable, as tending towards the strengthening of any fortifications. Battlement towered above battlement in grand array: but, as far as my slight knowledge

went, I am of opinion, that all this display of revetment walls, with but very weak batteries upon them, is nothing. A few shot from an attacking party, would soon bring the rubbish down upon the fortifications beneath, and render them untenable: and a strong escalading party, with high ladders, and stout hearts, would very soon carry the works. I am told, that the French, when thay had possession of the citadel, strengthened and improved the works; but I saw nothing particular to make me believe that any improvements had been made. Whether or not, there is now ample room for such. Some repairs were going on, but when they are to be finished, is best known to the Padsha.

I entered the citadel by one of the gates—(a rattle-trap affair which a pound

of powder would blow to atoms;) and proceeded on foot, up a steep ascent, through another gateway, into the *body of the place ;* and here my guide took me up a flight of steps, on to the ramparts: and I walked about admiring the view below, and the country around me. It was a lively scene, certainly. The busy hum of human beings; the noise and din of life; I could hear distinctly, men, women and children; horses, mules, camels, and dromedaries, moving to and fro, gave test of the every day working of the immense machinery of this extensive city. In the distance, lay the wide expanse of desert, the Pyramids forming no mean objects in the landscape; while the waters of the once bloody Nile, appeared meandering through the city, and far away; carrying on its bosom many a freighted

craft; and pouring its restless tide, along the same course which it had ever pursued, into the waters of the Mediterranean.

I was anxious to see the ordnance with which the batteries of the citadel were armed; and asked to be shown the nearest guns. I was taken to the saluting battery, so it was called; and did look upon a sight which astounded me! I certainly expected better things in a military point of view, from Mahomet Ali. If I recollect, the guns were ranged at the *gorge* of a bastion, and if not wrong in my calculation, there were about ten or twelve of them, of different calibre; some battering guns; some field-pieces; some ships' cannonades; a howitzer or two, and, I think, a mortar; I should say, from their appearance, that the whole turn-out,

guns and carriages, must have been constructed many years ago; for they were very old, and how they could stand fire I cannot tell! These guns are a disgrace to the place; and, if all the rest of his Highness's ordnance is of the same description, I cannot say much for his artillery.

A thorough soldier loves, and is proud of, his profession, and his eye naturally, and, as if by instinct, catches at anything connected with it, so was it with me. I looked at the fortifications; I took a peep at the artillery; and I had a good scrutiny at the men; those on guard at the different gates and on sentry on the ramparts. I have seen troops, and have had much to say to them. Our native soldiery in India are considered, *by strangers,* queer looking fellows: but these

Egyptian soldiers are the queerest set I ever met with! Looking at them as men, and judging from their thews and sinews, they are unobjectionable; strong and muscular, and apparently capable of undergoing much fatigue; but such uniforms! such accoutrements! such arms, and such knapsacks, defend me, thou God of War! I will not call them troops; they deserve only the designation of *rabble.* The indolent, careless, and slouching manner of the sentries; the way in which they carry their firelocks; indeed, their *tout ensemble* is shameful in the extreme! The cavalry men are a shade or two better; they are clean, pretty well dressed, and have a soldier-like appearance: but the Infantry! I did not know that such were in existence! The troops of a petty Rajah in India are not worse than these, and

they are bad enough. Travellers see strange things.

I observed a great many men (officers as well as privates) had only one eye, the right being out. This appeared marvellous to me. How it was, I could not conceive; so I inquired of friend Abdoollah, who told me that when the Padsha was at war in former times, he used to press men into his service, to prevent which, the parents of families, both high and low, plucked out the right eye of all their male children; so as to preclude the possibility of their being taken for the ranks.

The crafty Padsha was not to be outwitted by his subjects; so, after a space of time had elapsed, and these males had grown up, he issued orders for the organising of regiments to be composed

entirely of one-eyed men; to be taught to fire with the left shoulder, and to carry their muskets on the right; an excellent plan, and this accounts for the one-eyed soldiery I allude to! I was told that there were several thousands of these men in the Padsha's service. I wonder whether they are good shots!

And now I must be permitted to remark, that it is a great pity his Highness (who from all accounts, is a man anxious to introduce improvements of every sort into his kingdom) does not employ English officers to organise his army! I dare say he would find no difficulty in obtaining the services of as many as he wishes, if he treats them properly and pays them well. We have our countrymen in the service of Austria, Spain, and Portugal, and other powers; and, I

should imagine, serving the Padsha of Egypt would be just as honourable and equally advantageous.

The Padsha must establish some titles, confer them upon his officers, and make it, in a pecuniary point of view, worth their while to serve him; and his Highness may depend on it, he will have as fine an army, as he may ever wish for if officered by the British; the subject deserves his serious consideration. It is a pity, that while the troops of other countries are advancing in improvement, his own should be in the back ground.

I was shown the spot where the massacre of the wretched Mamelukes took place. I dare say many of my readers are aware of the circumstances connected with this disgraceful tragedy; but, as perhaps some are ignorant of the facts, I will here

narrate them as briefly as I can. The Padsha had, for a long time, been jealous of the Mamelukes. He fancied that they interfered with his happiness and prosperity as a sovereign: and consequently contrived, by the most desperate means, to rid thimself of a body who were obnoxious to him. He may have had good grounds for his antipathy, which justified him in his own opinion, and furnished him with grounds for his purposes: the following manner he adopted to carry his diabolical project into execution. He invited all the Mamelukes at Cairo to partake of a *zeafut*, or banquet, on the occasion of a festival; I thing it was the *Ramzau;* and it was arranged, that the whole should move in procession, from the Mosque, (where they had congregated to perform their religious ceremo-

nies,) to the banquet? headed by the Padsha himself. The procession marched into the quadrangle, the Padsha mounted the steps leading to the palace, or place appointed for the feast, and gave a signal; upon which, a deadly fire was opened from the surrounding buildings upon the astonished Mamelukes, who fell, killed or wounded, from the effects of the musketry; and parties of men rushed in, dispatching the survivors. One only escaped the dreadful butchery; mounted upon his powerful steed, which had never failed his rider; he cut his way through by that which they had all entered; dashed up the steps on to the ramparts; and, giving his horse the spur, pushed over the obstacles in his way, and bounded over the parapet, falling a height of upwards of fifty feet, in safety on to the

ground! His noble, faithful horse was killed, by the fall; but he escaped unhurt; it was a wonderful feat, and worthy of a man. His comrades were all killed, and he alone survived, to tell a tale of disgrace, which will for ever be a bloody stain upon the historic page of the Egyptian sovereign! He had bodies of troops concealed in the buildings, which enabled him to carry his monstrous purposes into effect. I saw the brave Mameluke, and exchanged salutations with him. He is a fine old man, and now, I believe, on terms of intimacy with his sovereign; who, although guilty of a degrading act, has had the generosity to admire that of one whom he had just treated as a foe, and that, perhaps, without any just cause; and whom he has since learnt to regard as a friend! And this is an account of the

massacre, put down, as I heard it related to me at Cairo; if I am at all incorrect, as to facts, I must beg the reader's forgiveness, as I am trusting entirely to my memory which it must be allowed is sometimes apt, even with the best of us, to prove treacherous.

Abdoollah conducted me to the new Mosque, which was being built inside the Citadel. It is composed entirely of Egyptian marble; and is lined with alabaster; the marble resembles in its veins the ivory of the elephants' teeth. It is situated near the famous palace of stone, and is really a splendid specimen of oriental architecture; is very extensive: and in the centre of the area there is a circular building, which I was told is the place intended exclusively for the Padsha himself, to perform his devotions in; a very

comfortable roomy affair, and worthy the honor done to it.

Returning by another road, we came to what is called *Joseph's Well*, an extraordinary excavation, which I was recommended to see. We procured a guide, an Egyptian woman, fat, dirty, greasy, and as ugly as sin? She lighted us down the dark steep descent. Down, down, down, we went, till we came to a halt; and the woman pointed at the well, which certainly is a wonderful thing. But why it should be called *Joseph's*, I cannot make out, nor could the guide inform me on the subject. Abdoolah said that the Arabs declare it to have been dug by Joseph during the famine. I was glad when we were once more in the open air, for the damp of the subterranean passage was anything but agreeable, and the darkness

made the descent any thing but safe. It made me quite giddy to look down into the depth below; and the dreadful height above, with one small speck of light in dim perspective. The only good water is procureable from this well; they have had to dig deep enough for it, at all events. I will not venture to assert the enormous depth of this excavation from the surface to the bottom, lest I should overrate the dimensions; suffice to say, that it must have been upwards of two hundred feet.

I was informed by a person at Cairo, that the natives pointed out the site of the house, where Potiphar, *the captain of the guard* resided, and the place where Joseph was confined! I passed these localities, but as there was nothing to induce me to believe the story, I took no notice of it,

though I do not see why the circumstance is not worthy of credit, as much as any of the other traditions of the Arabs, who are generally considered most faithful in their memorials of ancient events and places. But, let us now quit the citadel, as I fear we have been long enough in it. The place is remarkable for many reasons, and I would recommend the traveller not to omit seeing it, if he visits Cairo.

CHAPTER XXI.

Boulac—Steamers—A Start down the Nile—River Scenery—A French Count—A Night on Board—Atfeh—Mahmoodie Canal—Track Boats—The Voyage.

At length the day arrived, so long desired, for our leaving Cairo; and glad indeed were we when we heard the tidings. Bills were paid, accounts settled, and the last dinner discussed; after which, the whole posse of our passengers started in vans for Boulac,

where we were to embark. We had a regular scramble for donkeys and horses, as may be supposed; and a fine business it was: — the whole cavalcade moving through the crowded streets of Cairo. The ladies in the vans, the gents mounted, and the distance about two miles. I was glad to jump off, for I was almost suffocated with the dust, and narrowly escaped having my leg broken by the wheel of one of the vans catching me on the knee. Boulac is a place, on the outskirts of Cairo on the banks of the river famous for the college, or rather seminary, founded by the Padsha. There is also a printing establishment, said to be rapidly progressing towards perfection. The persons employed are active and intelligent. The types are English, and I believe they are so far advanced that lithographic prints are also

taken at the place. Mahomed Ali seems to be doing a great deal, and if his life is spared to him, he will no doubt introduce many more improvements which will serve to raise Egypt to rank amongst the civilized nations of the world.

When arrived at Boulac there was a rush on board the steamers. I was informed that each man would have to look out for himself to secure his berth, &c. &c. I therefore left my wife to get out of the van as well as she could, and jumped on board the nearest vessel, cloak in hand, and forthwith dived down into the great cabin, (small enough) to do the needful. I came to a door at the sternmost part of this cabin, I opened it; and saw another cabin, with two comfortable little bed places on either side. I threw my cloak in, locked the door, and put the key into

my pocket; delighted at the thoughts of having obtained such nice quarters. I went back again, brought my party and bundles down, and showed them into the said dormitory. It was late in the evening when we embarked, that is to say, past sunset. I therefore lighted the cabin lamp, made the bed as nicely as I could, and went out to see what was going on, on deck. There were two steamers prepared for our accommodations, such pretty little craft. The *Lotus* one, and the "Little Nile" the other. Our party was divided into two, and my wife and I were apportioned to the latter boat. I must now mention the accommodations on board our little steamer. There is one large cabin for ladies abaft the engine room, astern of which is the smaller one I secured; forward, there is another large cabin for the males. These

apartments are of course not very extensive, in point of length, breadth or height, though they are denominated *large*. There are seats fore and aft, wide enough for any one to lie down upon; and tables down the middle. Those who are so fortunate as to secure places on these seats have a snug resting-place; but others are obliged to rough on the tables or floor. There happened to be but four ladies altogether, so that there was ample room for the whole; and it was agreed upon, that this large stern cabin should be given up exclusively to the ladies, except at meal time, when gentlemen were admitted, at their invitation; kind dear creatures, how could we get on without them, even on board of a Nile steamer?

The Lotus started before us, and we followed at a rapid rate. Right merrily did

the pretty boat cut her way through the waters of this famous river, and a happy party had she on board of her! I do not remember having ever sailed in such a plaything before, as this little steamer. Looking down the hatchway of the engine room, I was amused to see the machinery working such diminutive articles, after the enormous engines of the Hindustan.

As I said before it was past sunset when we started. The scenery on the river was tolerably good. The pyramids in the distance, the great city of Cairo and the surrounding country formed an agreeable picture. The evening set in windy and cold, we consequently congregated at the funnel, where we sat enjoying the warmth, chatting away and relating all our adventures since our arrival and residence at Cairo.

Among our passengers on the *Little Nile*

were a French Count and his Countess, with one or two Frenchmen *en suite.* I mention this party more particularly as they form characters in the drama enacted on board, and which I am going to relate.

This said Count was a tall, over fed pudding faced, pug-nosed, coarse, consequential fellow; who jabbered away with his countess and retinue at a most awful rate; picking his teeth as well as his nails with the *same* penknife, and giving himself (or rather attempting to do so) all the airs of a first rate aristocrat! His lady was a shade better in point of general appearance, she was however as fat as her spouse, a healthy woman,and more like a cook than any-body else. There was one thing in her favour, she had better manners than her lord and master! though I did observe her talking with her mouth full, and, when writing her

journal scratch her head with her pencil! Her countess-ship took her place, as a matter of course, in the ladies' cabin, and every civility becoming her *rank* was shown her by our woman kind, all right and proper.

In due course of time, tea and supper "two birds with one stone," as it were, made their appearance, and were served in the saloon, and all the males came down to partake of the good cheer; the count and his companions (countess excepted) staid on deck. We had an excellent repast. There was cold ham, cold tongue, cold fowl, cold beef, cold mutton, cold every thing, except tea and coffee, which were most provokingly hot! There was beer, claret, port, sherry,

> Brandy and gin,
> To swell the skin;

beside whiskey and old tom, *ad libitum;* so that in the way of eating and drinking,

we were not on *short commons*. We had much merriment, and agreeable conversation, till the party broke up; the men went away, and left the ladies in full possession of the after cabin, wishing them comfortable sleep and sweet dreams! There was a jollification going on in the fore cabin; brandy and water, whiskey, punch, cheeroots, smoke and singing; so that sleeping was quite out of the question, until about one o'clock in the morning, when all was still, save the rattling of the paddles and the noise of the waves, as our trusty little barky glided swifty through the waters. I threw my clock on the floor and lay awake, not being able to sleep on account of a dreadfnl head ache, caused by the smell of tobacco. It began to rain hard, so that going on deck was an impossibility; presently, I heard footsteps on the

companion ladder, when who should enter our cabin, dripping, but the Frenchmen; (the count was not among them;) every n ook and corner was occupied; the floor; under the tables, on the tables, the seats, chairs, every where, lay a sleeping Englishman. There was a lamp burning. I saw the look of despair on the faces of these unfortunate men; it served them right, for had they been more sociable, matters might have been otherwise, but as it was, they had held aloof from us from the commencement, stuck like leeches to that count of whom they thought such a deal; and were at last obliged to shift for themselves, when the rain came pouring down upon them. One of them when he saw the state of affairs, exclaimed, "Parbleu! Voici les Anglais; Que ferrons nous?" the other, shrugging his shoulders'

answered, "Il pleut!" As much as to say, "we had better stay here or get wet deck." However, stay they did not, but quitted the cabin, and where they went I shall presently show the reader.

About three o'clock in the morning we arrived at Atfeh; where we quitted the steamers and went into large boats which were brought alongside. It was a dismal, wretched morning; a cold wind accompanied by a drizzling rain. All in the fore cabin roused up and began dressing, during which operation, one of our married men came down in a great rage, exclaiming against the French count, who had demeaned himself in a most improper, ungentlemanly way, by intruding, with his male companions, into the cabin, where the ladies were slumbering, and *en dishabille*, a breach of decorum, of which he

had been guilty, whilst we were all asleep in the fore-cabin; and which he would not have dared to do, had any of us been awake. The ladies were obliged, in consequence, to quit the large cabin, and fortunately for them there was room in the little berth which my wife had; so they took refuge there and slept comfortably until we reached Atfeh. The reader may imagine what our feelings were when we heard of this gross outrage; the idea of our ladies having been intruded upon, by a shabby fellow like that, was sufficiently annoying, but what provoked us most was, that he did not attempt to make any apology, but declared he had as much right to the cabin as the ladies, and that he had gone to sleep with his wife! Not content with going himself, he had had the indelicacy to introduce his

friends. We voted the whole party a good ducking. However, a general complaint was made to the agent, who was on board the other steamer, and he satisfied us that he would report the Frenchman's behaviour to the Consul when we reached Alexandria, this he most certainly did, and the consequence was, a severe censure from the French Consul, and the *amende honorable* to the ladies for this breach of good behaviour, a circumstance of such rare occurrence on the part of a French gentleman. This fellow was a disgrace to the nation. I suspect he was a *humbug*, and that he was nothing after all, but a discarded *valet*, or a servant travelling in one of his master's old coats! For no gentleman could have behaved as did this raggamuffin!

Atfeh is a village where the Mah-

mooder canal joins the Nile; called so after the Padsha. There are regular canal locks and other arrangements, so that the passage from the river into the canal is quite easy and safe. The scene at this junction, at three o'clock in the morning, can be better imagined than described; however, the picture is briefly drawn and best comprehended when I say, that there were two steamers full of passengers (men, women, and children,) with track boats along side. The trans-shipment taking place; torches glaring and flickering; wind blowing hard, rain falling fast; Arab boatmen chattering; and Europeans calling to each other; women screeching, and children crying. It was a very unpleasant business, and I was glad when we were stowed away in the boat to which we were allotted. I may as well

mention that these boats are towed along the canal by a small steam tug, on the *screw principle.* They are long narrow things, high out of water; a long cabin fore and after, and a little one in the stern; they are so *crank,* that the least motion causes them to upset; so we were obliged to sit still during the whole time we were in them. This was the worst part of our journey; I think, however, we managed to enjoy ourselves. The ladies had the stern cabin, and the other was occupied by us men. There was plenty to eat and drink; we amused ourselves with cards, singing and chatting; while the *count* and his *countess* sat in the corner, mumbling to themselves, and looking *very small* indeed after the occurrences of the night. Some of our lads looked very angrily at him, and we all

felt annoyed that such a *Johnny Crapeau* should go unpunished; poor fellow, he looked a miserable specimen of a count, with his unwashed face, long hair and greasy moustache. I could not help pitying him; a more unfavourable, ungainly looking monster I never saw. There was nothing interesting along the banks of the canal, save here and there a wretched village of mud huts and miserable inhabitants; a donkey or two and some half starved ducks and hens. We met several boats with travellers in them, dragged by men on the shore; slow work indeed; about a mile and a half an hour! The boats seemed comfortable and large, but defend me from going at snail's pace along such a dull rout! We also saw some boats full of troops; such a dirty rabble, such hooting; such shouting; no

order, save disorder; discipline in the Egyptian army, seemed to me, from what I saw, a thing that had no existence. A fatigue party was on shore, helping to drag their boats; there they were, non-commissioned officer and private, *cheek-by-jowl;* pushing and sky larking, pelting those on board with mud balls, and making a target of the drum which was suspended to the stay of the mast! I never, in all my days, witnessed such disgraceful proceedings; the officers seemed just as bad as, if not worse than, the men. There is an old saying, about mice being very playfully inclined in the absence of the cat; in this instance, however, both cats and mice were enjoying the fun to their heart's content!

END OF VOL. I.

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